

# East Europe protests press fight for democratic rights

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Millions in East Germany and Czechoslovakia continue to press the fight to rid themselves of repressive structures, restrictions, and the domination of Stalinist Communist parties. They are part of the struggle for democratic rights that is sweeping Eastern Europe and that has won the admiration of working people around the world.

The Communist parties, the instruments of iron rule by the privileged bureaucratic castes for more than 40 years, are shattering; and the privileged layers are attempting to find alternative means to maintain their domination in a much more unstable framework.

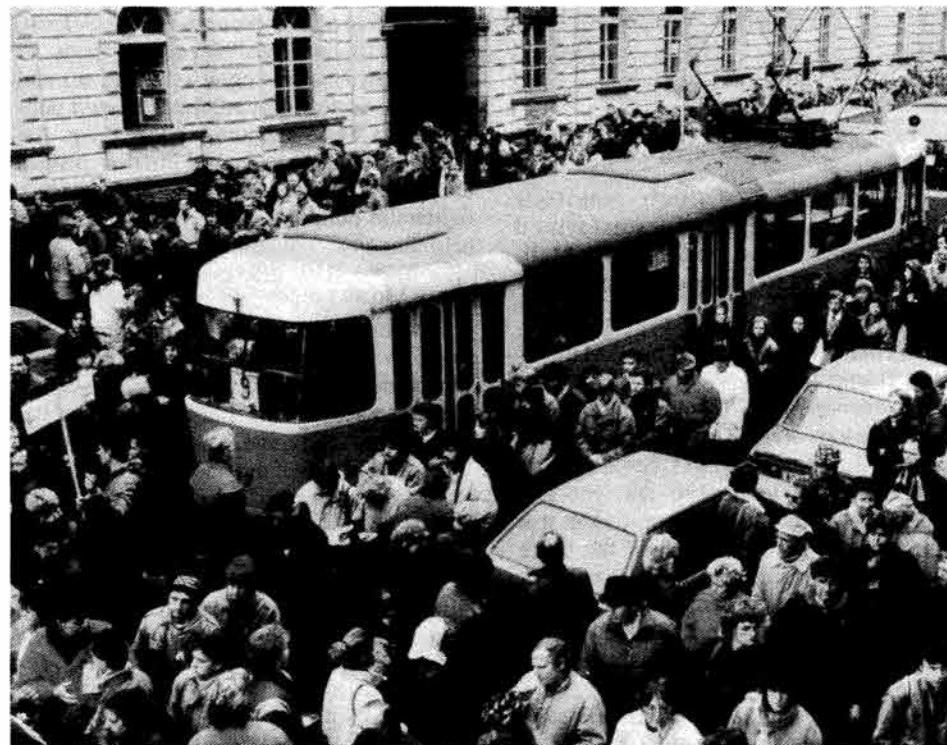
For the first time in decades, the door for working people to engage in political discussion, debate, activity, and organization is beginning to open. As the barriers and isolation imposed by the bureaucratic regimes are smashed and workers begin to be politicized through their fights, they will begin to recognize and reach out to fighters in other parts of the world, from the Caribbean to southern Africa.

#### Central Committee dissolved

In East Germany, recent demonstrations forced the dissolution of the Socialist Unity Party's 163-member Central Committee and ruling Politburo on December 3. The action represents the second and largest shake-up in the SUP's leadership since mid-October, when Erich Honecker, the party boss for more than 20 years, was driven from power.

The SUP, East Germany's Stalinist Communist Party, has been rocked to its foundations since September by the rising protests for democratic rights. Outrage stirred by reports of corruption and abuse of authority among government and party officials have added fuel to the most recent protests.

Hundreds of thousands of East Germans clasped hands to form a human chain that stretched across the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) on the same day the Central Committee resignations were an-



Tens of thousands poured into streets of Prague during November 27 two-hour protest strike. Factory strike committees and opposition groups are planning further strike action if government does not meet their demands.

nounced. Protests by party members called for the ouster of the "reactionary party apparatus" and the resignation of Egon Krenz, Honecker's replacement. Krenz subsequently quit December 6.

#### Officials arrested

Before dissolving itself and forming a 25-member temporary working group to run party affairs, the Central Committee expelled Honecker and 11 others from party membership. Three former government officials have been arrested on charges of corruption and a fourth is being sought, but is reported to have fled the country. Former Politburo members, including Honecker, have been placed under

house arrest pending investigations.

Suspect officials were barred by police from access to their offices, party computers, and safes. Flights to Romania were canceled to prevent officials from shipping out damning evidence.

In Leipzig, protesters marched to State Security offices forcing the secret police to immediately halt the destruction of incriminating files and documents. People in the cities of Dresden and Erfurt also entered secret police headquarters to secure files and other materials. In East Berlin, groups of citizens caught and detained officials sneaking out of their offices with files and hard

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# Philippines army coup shakes regime

BY SELVA NEBBIA

The attempted military coup against the Philippine government of Corazon Aquino began on December 1 ended with the surrender of rebel forces December 7. The surrender came in the wake of the declaration of a state of emergency by Aquino which gives the government the right to seize or operate any privately owned utility in the "public interests." Press restrictions were also announced.

The use of U.S. military force to back up Aquino put rebels who had substantial support in the Philippine military at a disadvantage. U.S. President George Bush ordered F-4 Phantom fighters to provide air cover for Aquino's forces and U.S. pilots were ordered to shoot down rebel aircraft.

This is the most serious in a series of coup attempts launched by sections of the military against Aquino since she came to power in 1986 following a massive popular rebellion that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

Rebel forces, that had controlled Manila's affluent Makati financial district, agreed to a December 6 cease-fire with loyal government troops to allow the evacuation of hundreds of foreigners from their hotels in the area.

The troops involved in the coup attempt were reported to have come from the Philippine marines and sections of the army. They received support from provincial troops in Cebu, the Philippines' second largest city, and Davao, 500 miles south of Manila. About 35 junior officers issued a statement supporting

the rebels. Two battalion commanders and a regional intelligence chief resigned in sympathy with the insurgent troops.

It is believed that the rebel troops were led by Gregorio Honasan, a cashiered colonel who escaped from prison last year. Honasan was held after leading an abortive 1987 coup attempt.

The military coup in the Philippines came at a time when there is growing dissatisfaction by working people in the country over the worsening economic situation and the Aquino regime's policies. Basic services such as transportation, electricity, telephones, water, and garbage collection have been deteriorating.

Under pressure from imperialist bankers, who are concerned about collecting the interest on loans they've made, the Aquino government has cut subsidies on basic consumer goods such as rice and cooking oil, increased school fees, and prioritized payments on the \$30 billion foreign debt.

Moreover, the Aquino government has stepped up attacks on labor unions and peasants organizing to defend their rights. The *New York Times* reported that labor unions had threatened general strikes prior to the coup. The current state of emergency can be used to undercut union actions.

The attempt to overthrow the government began when rebel troops attacked three military camps and three broadcast stations, and bombed the presidential palace December 1.

In a statement issued the evening of December 1, Aquino said she had requested

Washington's support because loyal troops lacked the ability to contain the rebels. "The enemy is routed," she stated, "but is not yet vanquished." The chief of staff of the armed forces, Renato DeVilla said in a radio broadcast, "It's over. It's just a matter of cleaning up."

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# 'Militant' supporters to join sales teams to major coalfields

BY RONI McCANN

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper have launched a major effort to increase the circulation of the paper among miners, their families, and other workers by joining sales teams to every major coalfield across the United States beginning this week.

At two recent political conferences of socialist activists in St. Louis and New York, 28 volunteers signed up to join *Militant* teams to coal-mining regions right away. The goal is to be able to send regular teams of supporters to the coalfields from now until May.

This campaign, and the enthusiastic response from supporters so far, is based on the results of the recent nine-week international subscription drive during which thousands of workers decided to get the *Militant* on a regular basis. This was especially true in the

# *Socialists discuss Machinists' strike at Eastern*

BY SUSAN LaMONT

NEW YORK — Socialist activists from up and down the East Coast came to New York December 2-3 for a political conference to discuss the big changes taking place today in world and U.S. politics and the growing opportunities these developments present.

The New York conference — sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party — drew more than 260 members and supporters of the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance and delegations from the Montréal and Toronto branches of the Revolutionary Workers League in Canada.

A special *Militant* Labor Forum held the Saturday night of the conference on "The Failure of Socialism and the Future of Communism" drew 50 additional people. *Militant* editor Doug Jenness was the speaker.

Most conference participants were union activists from the airline, garment, railroad, electrical and electronic, meat-packing, oil and chemical, and other industries. They came to the conference with months of experience as cofighters in the wave of current labor struggles. Among them were 10 International Association of Machinists members on strike at Eastern Airlines in Boston, New York, Newark, Philadelphia, Miami, and Washington, D.C., and two members of the United Mine Workers of America.

#### 'Something new in labor movement'

Something new has developed in the U.S. labor movement in recent months, a new pattern of struggles, explained Ernie Mailhot in the meeting's opening report. Mailhot is a leader of the Eastern strike at New York's La Guardia Airport. A member of Machinists Local 1018, Mailhot was an aircraft cleaner before the strike started.

The deep interrelationship of mutual solidarity and support between the ongoing strike battle at Eastern Airlines and the mobilization of union miners to win the strike against Pittston Coal is at the heart of this new pattern, he explained. "These strikes — no matter how hard they get hit — won't die and won't go away," Mailhot said.

These battles have also reinforced and formed links with other struggles, including the restaurant and hospital workers' strikes in New York and the telephone workers'

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western and eastern coalfield communities where many miners are active in, or have their eyes on, the fight of the United Mine Workers of America against the Pittston Coal Group.

#### Pittston fight

This battle is one of the biggest national fights mounted by workers against the employers' union-busting drive in a decade. Union miners and others involved in this struggle have become increasingly confident of their capacity to fight and have met other fighters like themselves. In the process many have begun to question or have reached critical conclusions about the capitalist system and a government that consistently sides with the bosses they're fighting.

Many are open to socialist ideas and decide

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# Socialists discuss strike against Eastern

Continued from front page

walkouts, especially the militant fight at NYNEX in New York and New England.

"The links between these fights allow them to gather strength and for the workers involved to build confidence in themselves and others. Solidarity and ties with other workers bring staying power — which we can see is crucial, especially in the Eastern and Pittston fights," Mailhot said. "Fighters from these different battles begin to mix it up with each other, to get to know each other, and to identify with each others' problems, experiences, setbacks, and victories."

There are other signs of the growing mood of confidence and combat, both inside and outside the labor movement, said Mailhot. Workers in struggle are drawn toward fights on other social questions, such as demonstrations in defense of abortion rights, protests against U.S. backing for the military-dominated regime in El Salvador, and antiracist actions.

The new mood is also reflected in the increased response among working people, youth, and political activists to the *Militant* and other socialist periodicals and literature, he added.

## Machinists' strike at Eastern

Mailhot took a close look at the evolution of the nine-month-old strike by ramp workers, cleaners, mechanics, and other IAM members at Eastern.

"The strike at Eastern Airlines," he explained, "is the most developed, concrete, and thought-out experience the Socialist Workers Party has been through in the labor movement in many years."

When the Machinists' union struck Eastern Airlines March 4 — walking out with 99 percent of its members — strikers were determined to take on Eastern's union-busting, Mailhot said, and a big majority of pilots and flight attendants walked out with them.

Strikers mobilized in mass pickets and rallies, joined by thousands of other unionists.

"The rank-and-file strikers, who have been at the center of this fight from the beginning, began to assert themselves more and more," Mailhot said. During the first three months of the strike, Eastern was virtually grounded except for the New York-Boston-Washington shuttle.

## First setback

In June the strike suffered its first significant blow. The Northeast shuttle had been sold in May by Eastern to New York real estate speculator Donald Trump, Mailhot explained, and on June 7 it started up operations as the Trump Shuttle. "The pilots' and flight attendants' leaderships agreed for them to return to work with 'relaxed' work rules," he noted. "Worst of all, International Association of Machinists officials agreed for strikers to return to work without a contract." Twenty-two days after the IAM officials ordered the picket line taken down at the shuttle, a con-



Militant/Yvonne Hayes  
"The Eastern fight has transformed strikers," said strike leader Ernie Mailhot in his report to the conference.

cession contract was accepted by IAM members at Trump.

"The start-up of the Trump Shuttle under these conditions divided off a very important layer of strikers from the fight, despite efforts of some strikers to oppose this course," Mailhot explained. "It set the precedent that union officials would not defend the strike and union against Lorenzo's moves to break the strike by selling off parts of the airline — which he has continued to do." Frank Lorenzo heads Eastern's parent company Texas Air Corp.

The sale of the shuttle also freed up Eastern scab pilots to begin flying other flights, the first major step in Eastern's strikebreaking "reorganization" plan. A month later, Eastern was able — amidst protests by strikers and supporting unionists all over the country — to boost the number of its daily flights from 80 to 226.

At the same time this was happening, the fight in the coalfields was spreading and ties between the Eastern and Pittston strikes were being forged, Mailhot said. United Mine Workers members at Pittston Coal Group's mines in Virginia and West Virginia had walked out a month after the Eastern strike started, after working 14 months without a contract.

It didn't take long for the miners and Eastern strikers to find each other, he recalled.

## August treason by ALPA leadership

"In August the national leadership of the Air Line Pilots Association, along with the ALPA leadership at Eastern, told the pilots that the strike was over and it was time to go back," Mailhot said. "There was a rebellion

among the pilots against this treason and they voted to stay out. In the meantime, however, at least 200 pilots crossed the picket lines. Some even went on a campaign to get flight attendants to cross with them, which a number did.

"This was one of the most important turning points in the strike," Mailhot continued. "Lorenzo needed pilots very badly to keep up with his announced increases in flights, and the return of several hundred pilots at that point was crucial."

While the pilots' defection and a downturn in strike activity caused some strikers' morale to dip in early August, many IAM members met this blow by the ALPA leadership with renewed determination to keep fighting.

Eastern's August and September flight increases were met by protests. In mid-August, caravans of hundreds of strikers, many of them from Miami, began traveling up and down the eastern United States to gain publicity and build support for the strike. On Labor Day the Eastern and Pittston strikers joined striking telephone workers and other fighters in putting their stamp on the events held that day.

## More blows

Eastern is attempting to undermine the strike in another way: through the use of subcontracting companies, many of which are organized by the IAM, to service the newly restarted flights, Mailhot explained.

As strikers found out about this, they were outraged and began demanding that IAM officials call a halt to this sabotage of the strike. At the same time, efforts were begun by strikers in New York, Washington, Pittsburgh, and other cities to reach out to the workers at these companies and gain their support for the walkout.

The possibilities for doing this had been shown earlier in the strike when IAM members at Dispatch Services at Miami International Airport waged a successful fight to convince workers there to back the strike at Eastern by not getting jobs as scabs, despite the substantially higher pay being offered.

During the conference discussion period, Peter Seidman, an IAM member at Dispatch, explained how the fight to win support for the Eastern strike among his coworkers — most of whom are immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean — had also strengthened the union there. "The Eastern fight has changed my coworkers' view of unions and what they can accomplish," Seidman explained.

Another big blow to the strike occurred in September, Mailhot continued, when Eastern sold the bulk of its Philadelphia gates, along with other equipment and routes, to Midway Airlines.

"Instead of continuing the strike regardless of who owned the gates and fighting to keep this nonunion airline, Midway, from opening up there, IAM officials agreed to let Lorenzo

get away with trying to break the strike by selling off hunks of Eastern," Mailhot said. "It was a repeat, only worse, of what happened with the shuttle."

Josefina Otero, an IAM Local 1776 member from Philadelphia, explained to the conference that strikers there have fought to "take hold of the situation," despite some union officials' view that the Midway sale meant the strike was over. Local 1776 members discussed out how to avoid the trap of "scab-baiting" those Eastern strikers who have taken jobs at Midway. Instead, she said, they have built actions aimed at keeping the strike strong, including protesting Midway's handling of Eastern's air freight.

## Strike remains solid

The conference took place 10 days after the latest blow to the strike by the ALPA leadership, who have ended the pilots' sympathy strike. Officials of the Transport Workers Union, which represents flight attendants, have also taken the same action.

"This is a big blow to the strike," said Mailhot. "It emboldens Lorenzo, his scabs, and the government. It gives the media a new handle to claim 'the strike is over.' It undermines our efforts to expose Eastern's threats to safety. Despite this, however, it hasn't turned the strike around."

The reaction of most strikers to this blow is that "it is right and necessary to continue this fight," Mailhot said. "We may not get our jobs back, but we have to fight to keep Lorenzo from winning." He pointed to the December 8 "Stand up to Lorenzo" actions called by the IAM and AFL-CIO as the next opportunity to show the strike remains solid.

The workers who went into this strike are different people today than they were March 4, Mailhot said. "They have weathered many blows and worked through how to keep the strike moving forward. Fighting for nine months has transformed them and it has transformed the socialist unionists who have been in this battle from the start, part and parcel of the rank-and-file leadership that has developed during the strike."

## Perspectives in coal regions

On the second day of the conference, activists heard and discussed a report by Mary Zins, a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 2295 in southern Illinois. She reviewed the eight-month walkout at Pittston Coal Group and how Camp Solidarity in Virginia functions as a strike center, attracting thousands of miners and other unionists. She also described the central developments in the UMWA leading up to the Pittston fight, including lessons learned by miners from the defeat of the UMWA in the 1984-85 strike at A.T. Massey Coal and the successful 1987 UMWA strikes in the western coalfields. "This is not just a strike at Pittston," she said. "UMWA members all over the country have made it their own."

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# Boeing strikers gain on overtime, wages; fight victimization

BY KAREN RAY

SEATTLE — Some 58,000 workers ended their 48-day strike against Boeing Co. November 20, winning their first wage increase in six years.

The demand for a wage hike was central to the International Association of Machinists' strike, which involved workers here; in Portland, Oregon; and in Wichita, Kansas.

Over the last six years, year-end, lump-sum payments were made by the company in place of wage increases. The union campaigned against these payments during discussions on the current contract, pointing out that they can be taken away at any time while a wage increase is incorporated into the base pay. Signs in the union hall and flyers that were passed out said "Dump the lump."

Today, some 44 percent of the 6 million workers covered by major collective bargaining agreements receive bonuses or profit-sharing payments. Among union members this is up from 31 percent in 1984, according to the U.S. Labor Department.

The three-year contract, which was ratified by 81 percent of the membership, retained Boeing's original proposal of wage increases of 4 percent the first year and 3 percent each of the following two years. The contract increased the lump-sum payments from the original offer to 10 percent the first year, 5 percent the second year, and 4 percent the

third year. The cost-of-living allowance was increased to 99 percent of inflation, up from 83 percent in the old contract.

Also central to the strike was the demand for a reduction in mandatory overtime. Thousands of workers had been forced to work 200 hours of overtime in a given three-month period. This averaged 15 hours a week for many.

The new pact reduces mandatory overtime to 144 hours in a quarter and no more than two weekends in a row, down from four weekends in the old contract. The company now has to pay double-time for all overtime beyond 160 hours in a quarter.

In the two weeks leading up to the settlement, many new volunteers had been coming into the union halls and out to the picket lines. This was the response by many to the company campaign to force the union to vote on a proposal they made November 4.

The union negotiators turned down that offer which was even worse than the rejected October 3 proposal. Everything that was taken away in the November 4 proposal was restored in the November 20 agreement.

## 96 percent solid

Every Monday morning the picket lines were expanded in the event of an increase in scabbing, but there never was an increase in workers crossing the line. The union esti-



Jim Levitt

Seattle picket line November 8. Strike by 58,000 Boeing workers in Seattle; Portland, Oregon; and Wichita, Kansas, lasted 48 days.

mates the strike was 96 percent solid.

The economic impact of the strike was just beginning to be registered as major airlines announced revamping their schedules and curtailing expansion plans due to late delivery of their new planes. United Airlines scratched 15 flights from its schedule and Japan Air Lines postponed indefinitely an increase in its Tokyo-New York and Tokyo-Europe flights. Moreover, Boeing subcontractors were beginning to lay off workers.

The mood has been mixed since the settlement. For many, especially the daily volunteers, the strike seemed solid and their sentiment is that if union members had stayed out, more could have been gained. For others the strike went on longer than expected, and they were growing concerned with how much longer it would take to get a better settlement.

The negotiating committee was split 3 to 2 in favor of the package. Negotiators from Seattle and Wichita supported the pact, while the international union and Portland negotiators opposed it.

For most workers this was their first strike against Boeing and, for many, the first time they had walked picket lines. Some 40 percent of the Machinists have worked for Boe-

ing less than six years. At some locations, such as the giant Everett, Washington, plant, 60 percent of the work force has less than two years seniority. The last strike at Boeing by the Machinists was in 1977.

Upon returning to work November 22, 838 workers at the Everett plant found their jobs had been eliminated. Before the strike most of them worked on planes on the flight line or in quality control, but now they have no job assignment.

Tom Baker, District 751 president, said, "It looked like retaliatory action for the strike." The union held a news conference and has filed a grievance charging the company with "blatant disregard of the contract settlement." The contract calls for all strikers to be returned to the same job they held before the strike.

The union hall in Everett continues to be filled with activity as workers try to fight the company's move to reassign and downgrade this group of workers.

Karen Ray, a member of IAM District 751, was on strike at Boeing's Everett, Washington, plant.

## Activists in U.S. cities, W. Berlin protest aid to Salvadoran regime

matic commission.

In West Berlin, 2,000 people demanded an end to West German and U.S. support for the Alfredo Cristiani government of El Salvador. A number of students from several East German cities also participated in the action.

Contributing to this article were Jon Hillson from New York, Diane Shur from Omaha, and Lüko Willms from West Berlin.

### In our next issue . . .

#### Interview with Cuban official

At a conference titled "30 Years of the Cuban Revolution" held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, a delegation of 40 Cubans attended, headed by Ricardo Alarcón, Cuba's first deputy foreign minister.

At the end of the event, which occurred in early November and attracted over 600 participants, Alarcón gave an interview to *Militant* reporters Mary-Alice Waters and Jon Hillson. In our next *International Socialist Review*, a supplement to the *Militant*, we will be printing Alarcón's discussion of Cuban-U.S. relations, the military victory over South Africa in Angola, the crisis of capitalism, and the rectification process in Cuba.

## Pathfinder Fund victory

Pathfinder Press wants to thank the hundreds of people in the United States and around the world for their contributions making its fund drive a success.

Initiated in August, the fund projected raising \$150,000 by December 1. Before that deadline it was already over the top, and as we go to press the final amount collected is \$172,480.

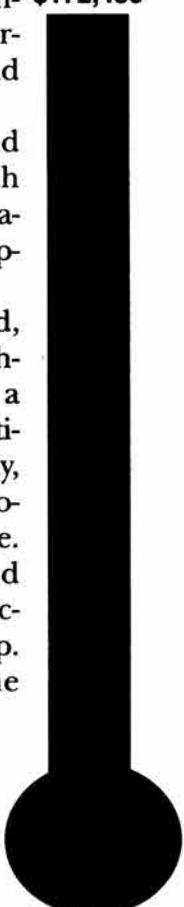
This enables Pathfinder to publish and promote revolutionary books and pamphlets including the writings of communist and working-class fighters such as Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Maurice Bishop, Thomas Sankara, Farrell Dobbs, James P.

Cannon, Nelson Mandela, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, and Leon Trotsky.

Obviously many fund supporters agree with Pathfinder that these materials are necessary weapons for all fighters.

Because of the fund, generous displays of Pathfinder literature were a part of numerous political events internationally, from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Harare, Zimbabwe. Over the next period equally important projections are being drawn up.

Although this is the final scoreboard, supporters with outstanding pledges are encouraged to send in their donations.



Rally speakers protested the recent killing in San Salvador of Jesuit priests and the bombing of offices of the Salvadoran union federation FENASTRAS. The explosion took the lives of 10 leading labor activists, including the federation President Febe Velásquez.

A protest December 1 at the Salvadoran Mission to the United Nations in Manhattan drew 350 demonstrators; 50 were arrested for civil disobedience.

Some 125 people gathered at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, December 3 to protest the U.S. role in El Salvador. The meeting was followed by a march to the Federal Building and a flashlight vigil.

Angela Sanbrano, the national coordinator of the Committee in Solidarity with the Salvadoran People (CISPES), spoke to 100 at a protest meeting at Cook University in New Jersey. Sanbrano shared the platform with Arnoldo Ramos of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front's political diplo-

# Miners at int'l conference learn about Curtis case

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year prison term in the state penitentiary in Anamosa on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for Curtis. For more information

Two Australian delegates bought the Pathfinder pamphlet *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis: A Packinghouse Worker's Fight for Justice*. They also made a financial contribution to the defense effort and promised to let unionists in Australia know about Curtis' fight.

New endorsers of the defense effort included miners from Namibia

Education Center of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Marian Carr, a supporter of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, explained Curtis' case. She recently moved to New Jersey from Des Moines where she was a coworker of Curtis' at the Swift packinghouse prior to his arrest. Carr encouraged everyone to join the campaign to protest prison authorities' actions prohibiting Curtis and other prisoners from receiving literature and correspondence in languages other than English.

New Jersey American Civil Liberties Union Executive Director Ed Martone described a number of frame-up and police brutality cases in New Jersey and introduced Jimmy Landano and his wife Camille. Landano was recently released from prison after serving 13 years. He was falsely accused of killing a police officer.

Jaime Vazquez, a Jersey City councilman, spoke in support of the Curtis defense effort. At his initiative the Jersey City Council passed a resolution last year supporting Curtis.

Valorie Caffee, president of the New Jersey Anti-Apartheid Mobilization Committee, commended Curtis' supporters for "meeting head-on the countercharges and the smear campaign that were used to try to cloud the issues and deter support." She was referring to the efforts of the Workers League, a group that claims to be socialist and has peddled the Des Moines cops' frame-up of Curtis.

Amy Bahruth, a staffer for Communications Workers of America

Local 1031 made an appeal for funds that raised \$250.

Cuban artist Aldo Soler added his name to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee's international list of sponsors. Soler, a member of the Cuban Communist Party and the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists, was in Des Moines at the beginning of November as part of a tour to more than a dozen U.S. cities to speak about contemporary Cuban art. Before the tour he had painted Cuban President Fidel Castro and Karl Marx on the Pathfinder Mural in New York.

In Des Moines, Soler visited the defense committee's new office and met with Kate Kaku, Curtis' wife and a leader of the defense committee, and Alfredo Alvarez, the chairperson of the Des Moines Human Rights Commission. (An interview with Soler is printed on page 5.)

From Iceland new endorsers of Curtis' defense effort include Pál Halldórsson, the president of the Alliance of Graduate Civil Servants. The Alliance organizes high school teachers, technicians, and other professionals and conducted a six-week strike in April and May winning wage increases and a three-year contract.

Sólveig Ásgrímsdóttir has also signed up. She is a member of the negotiating committee of the Icelandic Society of Psychologists.

Support from New Zealand con-

tinues. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee recently received a \$100 (US\$59) check from the Canterbury branch of the Clerical Workers Union.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is waging an international campaign to win Curtis and other prisoners the right to obtain literature and correspondence in the language of their choice and to share literature with each other.

Prison authorities have denied Curtis and other prisoners non-English materials and letters claiming they are a "security" problem. The real aim is to isolate and demoralize Curtis and other prisoners by cutting them off from the world events and political activity beyond prison walls, and to limit Curtis' ability to function as a political activist while in prison.

You can help in this fight by sending a protest message of your own or from your organization to: John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205.

Copies should be sent to: Attorney General Thomas J. Miller, Hoover State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319; Paul Grossheim, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 E. 12th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309; and the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Liz Sommers from Charleston, West Virginia, and Candace Wagner from Newark, New Jersey, contributed to this week's column.

## DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695.

If you have news or reports on activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

Delegates attending the Second Statutory Congress of the International Miners Organisation at the end of October discussed and exchanged experiences about working-class struggles in their countries. The congress was held in Cairo, Egypt.

Increasing attacks on democratic rights was one issue that the miners' representatives addressed. Many delegates had first-hand experience with frame-ups, jailings, and disappearances used against working-class militants. Some readily understood the stakes involved when the facts of Mark Curtis' case were explained and seven became endorsers of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

and Colombia, an organizer for the United Miners Federation of Pakistan, and an attorney from Britain who defends victimized unionists. Many other delegates received literature published by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Some delegates were already familiar with Curtis' case. A representative from New Caledonia said he had seen the segment on Curtis' trial which was featured on the U.S. TV program "On Trial." Dominador Mamangon, a leader of the Philippines KMU (May 1 Movement) labor federation, had previously sent messages to officials at the prison protesting their mistreatment of Curtis. He said the letters had been returned and were marked "address unknown." Mamangon said he would send another message and reaffirmed his support.

A call to "step up the action" in support of Mark Curtis was sounded by a panel of speakers chaired by Herb Rothchild of New Jersey SANE/Freeze on November 28. The meeting was held at the Labor Ed-

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Jaime Vazquez, a Jersey City councilman, spoke in support of the Curtis defense effort. At his initiative the Jersey City Council passed a resolution last year supporting Curtis.

Valorie Caffee, president of the New Jersey Anti-Apartheid Mobilization Committee, commended Curtis' supporters for "meeting head-on the countercharges and the smear campaign that were used to try to cloud the issues and deter support." She was referring to the efforts of the Workers League, a group that claims to be socialist and has peddled the Des Moines cops' frame-up of Curtis.

Amy Bahruth, a staffer for Communications Workers of America

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From Iceland new endorsers of Curtis' defense effort include Pál Halldórsson, the president of the Alliance of Graduate Civil Servants. The Alliance organizes high school teachers, technicians, and other professionals and conducted a six-week strike in April and May winning wage increases and a three-year contract.

Sólveig Ásgrímsdóttir has also signed up. She is a member of the negotiating committee of the Icelandic Society of Psychologists.

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Support from New Zealand con-

## Seattle trial opens in Domingo and Viernes case

BY LAURIE BURKE AND STUART CROME

SEATTLE — The trial in *Domingo v. Marcos* opened here November 20 in federal district court. The origins of the case date back to the 1981 murders of Filipino activists Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes, officials of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 37, which organizes cannery workers in Alaska.

Domingo and Viernes were both prominent opponents of the U.S.-backed Marcos regime in the Philippines. One month before they were gunned down, they had successfully introduced a resolution at an ILWU convention condemning the repression of trade unions in the Philippines and calling for an investigative team to visit that country.

Three Seattle hit men were convicted in 1981 for the murders. In 1982 the families of Domingo and Viernes filed a civil suit for \$30 million charging that the assassination of Domingo and Viernes was ordered by the Philippine government of Ferdinand Marcos.

During the original hearing in 1982, Marcos was granted immunity as head of a "friendly state." The FBI and CIA were also dismissed from the suit when the U.S. Justice Department objected.

In November 1987 the federal court ruled that Marcos was not entitled to head-of-state immunity and he was reinstated as a defen-

dant. With Marcos' death a few weeks ago, the suit now stands against his estate and Imelda Marcos, his widow. Two other defendants are Dr. Leonilo Malabed of San Francisco and Tony Baruso, the former president of the cannery local.

Malabed handled a special slush fund for Marcos labeled "Special Security Projects." Following the 1981 ILWU convention, Baruso, a Marcos supporter, traveled to San Francisco where Malabed dispensed \$15,000 from the slush fund shortly thereafter. The submachine gun used to kill Domingo and Viernes was traced to Baruso, who claims it was stolen.

In his opening statement to the jury, Jeffrey Robinson, the attorney for the activists' families, described the efforts of former Philippine president Marcos and his wife to silence the growing anti-Marcos opposition as well as the chain of command from the Marcoses down to the hit men paid to kill Domingo and Viernes.

As part of the suit's discovery proceedings, documents were obtained exposing the connection between U.S. government agencies and activities of Marcos' agents.

Revelations included FBI knowledge of Marcos' intelligence agencies operating out

of the Philippine embassy and consulates in the United States and an extensive disruptive investigation of leading organizations of the anti-Marcos opposition. This included the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP) to which Domingo and Viernes belonged.

The trial is expected to last a month and will hear several videotaped depositions. In one such video, current Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Raul Manglapus recounted threats of intimidation and violence by agents of Marcos operating in the United States and spoke of the role U.S. government agencies played in providing information on anti-Marcos activists.

## Jailed Haiti activists framed and convicted

BY SUSAN LaMONT

Three Haitian trade union and political leaders, jailed since November 1, were tried and found guilty November 9 on charges of possessing weapons to overthrow the government of Gen. Prosper Avril. The brief trial was "little more than a charade," reports *Haiti-Observateur*, a New York-based weekly.

The three leaders are Jean-Auguste Mesyeux, executive secretary of the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH);

Marino Etienne of the September 17 Popular Organization; and Evans Paul from the Confederation of Democratic Unity.

They were arrested in Carrefour by soldiers and undercover police. The next day, November 2, the three leaders were shown on national television bearing signs of severe torture.

At the November 9 trial, Etienne was still unable to stand without support, and Paul had trouble walking, *Haiti-Observateur* reports. Since then, their physical condition has continued to deteriorate. Activists in Veye Yo, a Haitian community organization in Miami, report that the prisoners are now on a hunger strike in the national penitentiary. They are refusing medical care, demanding to be treated by their own doctor.

The arrests have sparked a widespread outcry, including broadly observed protest strikes in Haiti November 7, 8, and 22. Opponents of the growing repression in Haiti have organized picket lines at the Haitian consulates in New York and Montréal. There have been daily protests at the Haitian consulate in Miami since the arrests. On November 11 a demonstration was held in Brooklyn to demand release of the leaders, an end to the wave of government repression, and resignation of the Avril regime.

Among those protesting the arrest of Mesyeux, Etienne, and Paul was Panama's ambassador to Haiti, Rafael Santos Vargas.

When the three prisoners were leaving court after the trial, Santos greeted them with a message of support.

For this, Santos was declared persona non grata by the Avril government. He flew out of Haiti November 12.

Messages demanding release of the imprisoned leaders should be sent to: President Prosper Avril, Palais National, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Copies should be sent to CATH, 93 Rue des Casernes, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

## Miami Machinists demand release of imprisoned Haitian leaders

Several leaders of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Miami International Airport have signed a petition demanding the release of the three Haitian trade union and political leaders who have been imprisoned since November 1 in Port-au-Prince.

"As trade unionists in Miami, we are outraged by the brutal conditions that have forced tens of thousands of Haitians to flee their homeland," the petition states. "This is why we demand the immediate release of Jean-Auguste Mesyeux, Evans Paul, and Marino Etienne."

"Their real crime in the eyes of Haitian authorities is that they are leaders of the

CATH [Independent Federation of Haitian Workers] and other democratic organizations. . . . In our eyes, fighting for democratic rights and to defend the living standards of working people is not a crime. Rather, it is the basic duty of trade unions."

The petition is signed by Frank Ortis, president of IAM Local 702, which represents 3,000 striking Machinists at Eastern Airlines; Ernest Cottle, José Pérez, and Voygene Delva, IAM Local 1126 shop stewards at Dispatch Services; and IAM Local 2643 Vice-president Arturo Delgado and shop steward Marta Zopata. Local 2643 represents workers at foreign flag carriers at the Miami airport.



Jean-Auguste Mesyeux, one of union leaders now jailed, speaks at 1987 union federation rally.

# Pathfinder Mural: focus of debate

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK—Since the Pathfinder Mural was dedicated here November 19 it has been the subject of both local and national media coverage and debate. The mural is painted on the side of the six-story Pathfinder Building located on Manhattan's Lower West Side.

New York TV stations WCBS and WABC covered the unveiling on evening news programs, providing shots of the entire mural. "While Communism falls in Eastern Europe, a mural celebrating revolutionaries and communists has gone up in New York," the anchor at WABC said introducing the report. WINS news radio featured a spot every 20 minutes for several hours. WBGO—a Newark, New Jersey, jazz station—reported on it.

Newspapers oriented to New York's Black community favorably featured the unveiling. *Big Red News* had a photo of the mural on page two. The *Daily Challenge*, the city's only Black daily, ran a photo across half of the front page. *New York Amsterdam News* headlined its coverage, "Pomp and pageantry mark Pathfinder mural unveiling." The article reported that artists from more than 20 countries participated in the \$125,000 project. It also noted that Nelson Mandela's portrait was painted by South African artist Dumile Feni.

## 150 at New York fair of small publishers sign to defend mural

BY DOUG COOPER

NEW YORK—Efforts to defend the Pathfinder Mural against threats of defacement and vigilante violence received a big boost at the annual Small Press Book Fair here December 2–3.

Mural supporters staffing the Pathfinder book and mural display got an excellent response to a petition in defense of freedom of speech and artistic expression. Some 150 people, including writers, professors, publishers and publishers' representatives, journalists, students, artists, and other fairgoers signed.

Addressed to the city government, the petition calls on Mayor Edward Koch to ensure that the landmark political and artistic accomplishment on the side of the Pathfinder Building in Greenwich Village not be defaced or destroyed in the wake of recent editorials in two of the four daily English-language papers here.

The editorials in the *New York Daily News* and the *New York Post* included calls to vigilante violence while claiming the mural glorifies totalitarianism.

"Most people attending the fair oppose censorship, and so do the small publishers who were exhibiting," said Pathfinder editor Michael Baumann. "Many also see that the threats against the mural are not just directed at artistic freedom, but also at the right to read and consider all ideas, including the revolutionary ideas found in Pathfinder books," he added.

The mural, featuring major portraits of Pathfinder's most important authors and a giant printing press as its hub, celebrates the books published by Pathfinder. Depictions of Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela, and Malcolm X, as well as V.I. Lenin and other leaders of the Communist International in its early years, are among those featured.

Those who added their names to the petition included author Alix Kates Shulman, book fair organizer Tom Tolnay, New York University political science professor James Crown, and representatives of 13 exhibitors, including Curbstone Press, 3 Continents Press, Midmarch Arts Press, and Irish Books and Media.

"Some people had heard about the mural or had been by to see it and were glad to sign the petition to defend it," said Maggie Perrier of the New York Pathfinder Bookstore who helped staff the display. "Many were deeply concerned about the recent pro-censorship attacks on public art," she pointed out.

Petitions are now being widely circulated. Copies can be obtained from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12.

Mandela, imprisoned for nearly three decades, is a leader of the African National Congress of South Africa. Photos of the mural and Carole Byard, who painted Malcolm X, accompanied the report.

AP wire service

The Newark *Star-Ledger* and the *Buffalo News* from upstate New York picked up the story from the Associated Press wire service. The *Star-Ledger* headlined it, "Marx, Lenin, Castro stare out from N.Y. mural."

The AP story reported on the unveiling ceremony and described the mural. "Its central image is of a press churning out publications with their authors depicted on sheets of paper that thicken into books," the article said. It noted that portraits of Malcolm X, Ernesto Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and V.I. Lenin are prominently featured on the mural. It also cited the rising debate over the mural's funding and existence. It quoted the *New York City Tribune* as calling the mural "a veritable Mount Rushmore to communism." The *Tribune* denounced the small amount of funds provided by New York State Council on the Arts for the mural.

The *Milwaukee Journal* carried an AP wire photo of the mural with a caption describing it.

The *New York Times* ran a four-by-six inch photo with a caption describing the mural. "Mural praising revolutionaries is unveiled," the caption headline said. The photo was taken by Dith Pran, the Cambodian journalist who survived Pol Pot's rule, as shown in the movie *The Killing Fields*.

### 'Post' and 'News' editorials

The editors of two prominent New York dailies launched a savage and provocative attack against the mural.

The *New York Post* ran an editorial headlined "Off the wall—and that's where it belongs" on the day of the unveiling. The editors called the mural a "bizarre celebration



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Portrait of Karl Marx painted by Cuban artist Aldo Soler on the Pathfinder Mural

of totalitarianism" and called for its removal.

An op-ed article, "Why subsidize defamation?" by rightist ideologue Patrick Buchanan was carried in the *Post* a few days later. Using antigay bigotry, Buchanan attacked the use of government funds for the mural as well as for recent art exhibitions about AIDS.

The *New York Daily News* followed suit two days later with an editorial slamming the mural as a "garish specimen of Socialist Realism at its most vulgar." The *News* singled out Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, leaders of the Cuban revolution, for special invective. It concluded with its own suggestion for would-be vandals. "Seven-foot-high black letters" should be painted on the mural that

read "R.I.P." and "Never again," the *News* editors urged. Several days later the *News* followed up with a factual news story and photo in its "Manhattan Report" column. The headline read: "It's a mural with a moral."

Pathfinder Mural Project coordinators have called on supporters of freedom of expression and speech to demand that city authorities insure the mural and the Pathfinder Building are not defaced or vandalized as a result of the *Post* and *Daily News*' provocative editorials. Protest messages should be sent to: Mayor Edward Koch, City Hall, New York, N.Y. 10007. Copies should be sent to the Pathfinder Mural, Pathfinder Bookstore, 191 7th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011.

## Cuban artist says U.S. tour 'a success'

BY SELVA NEBBIA

NEW YORK—"I think that my tour was a big success," said Cuban artist Aldo Soler during an interview here shortly before his return to Cuba. Soler, a member of the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists, came to the United States on an invitation from the Pathfinder Mural Project.

During his two-month stay—from October 1 through November 27—Soler painted the portraits of Cuban President Fidel Castro and Karl Marx on the six-story mural on the wall of the Pathfinder Building on New York's Lower West Side. He later toured more than a dozen U.S. cities speaking on contemporary Cuban art.

"The Pathfinder Mural is a true work of art," commented Soler. With a huge printing press as its centerpiece, the mural features portraits of revolutionary and working-class leaders from all over the world surrounded by masses of workers, farmers, and students marching down the globe that serves as the background to the piece.

"While some might not like some of those portrayed in the mural," said Soler, "no one can deny that it is a good work of art."

### National tour

Soler said that during his tour he spoke to audiences that were "very heterogeneous. They included students, workers, farmers, farm workers, professionals, friends from different political parties and organizations like the Venceremos Brigade and the Antonio Maceo Brigade." Among those he met with were farm workers in struggle against big growers in the Yakima Valley in Washington State, miners on strike against Pittston Coal Group, and strikers at Eastern Airlines.

"They all shared a common interest in the Cuban revolution," Soler continued. "Very few of those I spoke to openly expressed hostility towards Cuba."

Soler's presentation on contemporary Cuban art included a slideshow that "represented a cross section of work done by Cuban artists who, like myself, were formed by the

revolution," he said. The 100 or so slides reflected a wide array of styles and themes, both abstract and figurative.

Most people were surprised at the work portrayed in the slides, Soler explained. "This was true in every city I visited," he added. "What they saw did not fit their preconceived notions of what Cuban art would be like. They believed that, unlike what they saw in the slideshow, artistic expressions in Cuba would be narrow and limited. The art work represented in the slides was very useful in dispelling the myth that there is artistic repression in Cuba."

Referring to the type of questions people asked during his talks, Soler said, "Everybody wanted to know about art, education, and life in general in Cuba. There was no real difference between the questions that a specialized audience, such as those in a museum or at the art schools, asked me and those asked by farmers in Des Moines or farm workers in the Yakima Valley, or the questions the Eastern strikers I was able to meet asked me."

Many of the audiences included Cubans who had emigrated as adults or had been brought here by their parents as young children. Most of them, like others, were genuinely interested in finding out more about Cuba. A few, though, were opposed to the Cuban revolution, Soler said.

"In Minnesota a student, an exile from Cuba," explained the artist, "was very hostile. After seeing the slides, she said that while everything I had shown was very good and pretty, it was all propaganda and that Castro was a terrorist."

"The rest of those present debated against her point of view," said the Cuban artist. "And when she found herself isolated, she said that when I visited Miami, I would find that most people there shared her ideas."

Soler continued, "I would have very much liked for her to have been in Miami with me. Because there too she would have felt isolated by the audience that came to my talk."

The main meeting held in Miami, continued Soler, "was genuinely an event in support

of the Cuban revolution, including chants of 'Long live the revolution.'

"These expressions to me were full of a sense of nostalgia," added Soler. "Many in the audience were having second thoughts about having left Cuba and expressed, if not a desire to return to their homeland, the desire to have a closer communication with their families there and with Cuba."

"I think the tour was important because it succeeded in bringing together people who want to break the blockade the United States has imposed against Cuba," Soler explained.

"My visit received the support of academics, congress people, city elected officials, students, workers, artists, and farmers. They were all brought together by Pathfinder to support the tour."

Wherever the Cuban artist spoke, tour supporters circulated petitions calling for further cultural exchanges between the United States and Cuba and for lifting the restrictions on travel between the two countries. Hundreds of supporters of democratic rights added their names to the petition.

In Atlanta, the City Council issued a proclamation welcoming Soler to that city, expressing its support for "open and free cultural exchanges" between that city and other countries. The proclamation described Soler's visit as "a positive step towards better relations and understanding between the people and governments of Cuba and the United States of America."

"Every tour of this type that can take place," concluded Soler, "is a wedge that is opened along the border of this blockade. And to the extent that we can pierce this blockade, the dividing line, the obstacles will be more and more fragmented and at one point the blockade will cease to exist."

An exhibit of 40 original art works by Soler and other Cuban artists was held at the Westbeth Gallery in Manhattan November 17–21. "I hope that this will be one of many such shows we will see here in the future," said Soler.

# Nordic unionists urge int'l support for strike

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists (IAM) members struck Eastern Airlines March 4 in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

Backed by flight attendants and pilots, the walkout crippled Eastern.

## SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

ern, grounding a big majority of its 1,040 prestrike daily flights.

Since July Eastern has been trying to restart operations. By November 1 it was scheduling 775 daily flights. On November 22, the Air Line Pilots Association ended its support for the strike. The Transport Workers Union, which represented striking Eastern flight attendants, followed suit the next day.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States and Canada. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

The Nordic Transport Workers Federation issued a strong statement of support for the Eastern strike at its meeting November 27-28, reports a recent IAM strike bulletin.

The federation represents transport workers unions in Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. The unionists also demanded that Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) stop aiding Texas Air Corp., which owns both Eastern and Continental airlines. SAS acquired nearly 10 percent of Texas Air's stock last year and has a marketing relationship with Continental.

The Nordic Transport Workers Federation represents 285,000 workers in the civil aviation, ground, and maritime transport industries.

The Eastern strike is a struggle for basic trade union and human rights, the Scandinavian unionists said, and Texas Air and Eastern are trying to harm the labor movement and collective bargaining process. The Eastern strike has international consequences and should be met with international trade union cooperation, they added.

The unionists demanded: 1) SAS should help stop Texas Air head Frank Lorenzo's antilabor policies or reevaluate its relationship with Texas Air; 2) the Scandinavian labor movement as a whole should back the Eastern strike; 3) the Scandinavian governments, which own 50 percent of SAS, should help stop Lorenzo's antiunion drive; and 4) the U.S. government should intervene to stop Eastern's attacks on the unions.

Working at Midway Airlines is not all it is cracked up to be in their ads. This is what Midway employees have reported to strik-

ing IAM Local 1776 member Josefina Otero from Philadelphia. Midway bought nine of Eastern's Philadelphia gates, along with other assets, in September and opened its "hub" there November 15, amidst protests by striking Eastern workers. Some Eastern strikers have recently gotten jobs at Midway.

Eastern strikers trying to get hired at Midway, a largely nonunion carrier, report that applicants have to wheel and deal with Midway over wages — and then never see promised pay increases.

The job classification of cleaner-gate agent at Midway gets \$5 an hour; auto shop mechanics get \$8 an hour; and aircraft mechanics, \$14 an hour — all substantially less than Eastern workers were paid before the strike.

Midway workers are expected to pay \$400 for their uniforms and cover cleaning costs. If you are a cleaner-gate agent, Midway expects you to own two different uniforms to go with both jobs.

Mechanics are the only ground workers in a union — the Teamsters. Workers at Midway have to go through a six-month probationary period. In reality, since there is no union for most workers, "probation" lasts forever, Otero notes.

Midway has also told new hires who are Eastern strikers that they can no longer be involved in the fight at Eastern.

This goes hand in hand with Midway's agreement to handle Eastern's air freight. Local 1776

members have been picketing Midway since November 15, protesting that Midway is doing struck work.

On November 26 two scab workers from Eastern's maintenance base at Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta drove over to Northwest Airlines' maintenance facility and went into the hangar to borrow some equipment. When workers in the



Militant/Kathy Mitchell  
November 15 protest by Eastern strikers at Midway's gates in Philadelphia.

hangar spotted them, a big hue and cry went up and the scabs were shouted out of the building. They left without the equipment they came for.

In early November, striking IAM Local 1018 member Susan Anmuth from New York's La Guardia Airport gave members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3, based in Queens, an update on the fight at Eastern, along with some suggestions about what they could do to help, at their monthly meeting.

As she was concluding, John, a Local 3 member, initiated a collection for the Eastern strike on the spot. When the business agent announced that members had contributed \$1,320, several workers shouted, "Wait! The bucket never got to me!" Altogether, the 200 unionists present donated \$1,400.

After her remarks, several workers came up to shake Anmuth's hand and assure her they would be out on the picket line at La Guardia. "You really struck a nerve in me and all these guys," said John.

On November 22, a large group of Local 3 members turned out at dawn to help Local 1018 leaflet Hudson General workers at La Guardia about the strike. Hudson General, an IAM-organized subcontracting company, is doing ramp and cleaning work at Eastern.

Maceo Dixon and Miguel Zárate from Atlanta contributed to this column.

# Striking Australian pilots hit by massive fines

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia — The Supreme Court of the state of Victoria ruled November 23 that the Australian Federation of Air Pilots (AFAP) is liable for damages arising from the pilots' current strike. Pilots have been on strike against airline companies operating domestic air routes across Australia for more

than three months, fighting to win a substantial pay increase. The court order means the pilots' association may have to pay up to \$10 million (US\$7,863,000).

At the beginning of their strike action in August, the pilots restricted their working hours from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to try to force the airline companies to renegotiate their contract. They resigned en masse when the airlines threatened to sue the AFAP and all pilots individually for damages.

In an attempt to get the pilots to return to work, the companies dropped the suits against individual pilots. The suit against the federation went ahead, however.

The airlines waging the all-out offensive against the pilots are Ansett airlines, which is jointly owned by the international transport corporation TNT and newspaper magnate Rupert Murdoch; government-owned Australian Airlines; and two smaller companies, East-West and IPEC Aviation.

The federal Labor government of Prime Minister Robert Hawke is backing the airlines' strike-breaking drive.

Despite this, the pilots have remained solidly behind the federation. Only about 50 pilots out of 1,600 who struck have defected from AFAP to sign individual contracts with Ansett or its subsidiary East-West, said one

Ansett executive.

The big majority of seats now available on domestic air routes are being provided by Royal Australian Air Force transport planes; aircraft chartered by the airline companies; and by Qantas, the government-owned international carrier, and other international airlines. Altogether capacity is estimated at 50 to 60 percent of pre-strike levels.

The airlines have declared their aim is to "rebuild" without the pilots' federation by forcing the pilots to sign individual contracts with the companies. The contracts include a 6 percent wage increase in exchange for increased flying hours and other work conditions set "at the discretion of the airlines."

The federal Industrial Relations Commission recognized the validity of these company contracts in October.

Initially, the pilots' strike focused on the demand for a 30 percent pay hike to bring their salaries up to levels paid pilots in other countries. The airlines refused to discuss the pay hike, saying it breached the national "accord" between union officials and the government to hold down wage increases to 6 percent. Leaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) — the country's main union federation — and the Hawke

government have bitterly denounced the pilots for trying to break this limit.

In early October, the pilots withdrew their demand for a 30 percent wage increase in favor of a demand for a guaranteed level of overtime pay, part of an agreement to increase productivity.

On October 27 the pilots also offered to return to work under the old contract during the busy Christmas holiday period.

Most pilots have taken other jobs during the strike, including 130 flying with airlines in different parts of Asia.

AFAP members recently held a demonstration at Brisbane airport. A protest by pilots in Melbourne outside a meeting where Hawke was speaking drew 500.

While officials of ACTU-affiliated unions have balked at supporting the pilots' strike and pay demands, a growing number of unionists have begun to express opposition to the measures taken by the airlines and the Hawke government to break the strike — measures which set dangerous precedents for strikebreaking by the military and courts.

For that reason, many unionists reacted angrily to the court's recent ruling against AFAP setting the astronomical fines. The ACTU has said it will assist the pilots' federation in appealing the ruling.

# Detroit auto workers protest plant closing

BY JEFF POWERS

HIGHLAND PARK, Mich. — More than 500 workers demonstrated at Chrysler's international headquarters here November 21, protesting the company's decision to close its Jefferson Avenue assembly plant in Detroit. Chrysler plans to shut the plant in February 1990, laying off 1,700 auto workers. The second shift, also 1,700 workers, was laid off earlier this year.

A demonstration of 250 was held the same day in St. Louis, where Chrysler has announced layoffs of 1,900 more at its No. 1 assembly plant in nearby Fenton.

Protesters at the Highland Park march came from many United Auto Workers locals in the Detroit area and from as far away as Kenosha, Wisconsin, where Chrysler closed an assembly plant last year.

Machinists union members on strike at Eastern Airlines participated in the march,

along with other unionists.

UAW members at the Jefferson Avenue plant found out about the plant closure from news reports. Earlier Chrysler had told the UAW that the plant would be kept open until 1991, when a new plant — paid for by more than \$300 million in tax giveaways from the city of Detroit — is scheduled to come on line.

UAW officials are calling on Chrysler to honor its 1988 national agreement with the union, which is supposed to prevent plant closings. This would mean that Chrysler would idle, not close, the plant, officials say.

If the plant were idled instead of shut, laid-off workers would be eligible for the company's "jobs bank" rather than only being eligible for "sub pay" — benefits paid to workers by the company during layoffs. Since the Chrysler sub funds are already largely depleted, getting into the jobs bank

would mean higher benefits for laid-off workers, at least for a while.

Many workers at the November 21 protest were from the Jefferson Avenue plant. Most of the UAW members still working there are Black and have 20 or more years at Chrysler.

If car sales continue to slide, said one of the Jefferson Avenue workers at the protest, "we have no guarantee that the new plant will ever be completed."

A big drop in car sales has led General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler to cut production through layoffs, plant closings, and extended Christmas shutdowns.

A number of Highland Park protesters had traveled to Camp Solidarity in Virginia as part of the "Motown to Coaltown" caravan to support the Pittston miners several months ago. Many have also participated in Eastern strike support activities.

# UAL buyout collapse highlights roles of Machinists, pilots

BY GREG McCARTAN

The letter from *Militant* reader Dean Denno printed on this page agrees with the *Militant* about the decisive role the members of the International Association of Machinists played in the failure of the United Airlines buyout in October. He disagrees, however, with several points in the article, "How the Machinists brought collapse of United's buyout deal," printed in the November 17 issue of the *Militant*.

Denno's letter raises questions that are on the minds of many workers, and answering them provides an opportunity to present a more rounded explanation of the attempted buyout and the social status of airline pilots. At the same time we can correct several errors in the original article.

To clarify the points Denno raises, a review of how the United buyout attempt came about would be useful.

On Sept. 14, 1989, the board of directors of UAL Corp., parent company of United Airlines, accepted a \$6.8 billion dollar leveraged buyout offer from the Master Executive Council of the United Chapter of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA); several of UAL's top managers, including UAL Chairman Stephen Wolf; and British Airways.

## Pilots commit \$200 million

The pilots' association officials committed \$200 million of United pilots' \$1.2 billion pension fund to help finance the deal. In addition, the 6,100 pilots at the airline were told they would be working an additional four hours a month for no pay, taking a 10 percent cut in pay, and giving up some vacation days. These concessions totaled \$250 million. United pilots approved the use of the pension fund money by a 90 percent majority vote in early October.

United management was to put in \$15 million, and British Airways \$750 million.

ALPA officials put the buyout together in response to another, lower, bid to purchase the airline. They and any other employees

they could convince to join them were to end up with a 75 percent stake in the company.

## \$1.5 billion in concessions

The buyout group sought to get both union and nonunion employees to agree to concessions totaling \$1.5 billion. These givebacks from United's 20,700 members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), 12,000 members of the Association of Flight Attendants, and 17,000 nonunion workers were needed to pay off the \$7.2 billion debt to be incurred by the buyout group.

A 10 percent wage cut was to be simply imposed on most nonunion workers. Many ramp workers, cleaners, and mechanics in the IAM, and members of the AFA, let their opposition to the takeback demands be known.

The day the buyout was announced, a United mechanic in Chicago told the *New York Times* he felt "we're being taken for a ride," by ALPA.

Those backing the deal — the banks, the buyout group, and UAL directors — thought the deal was signed, sealed, and delivered. They were not counting on the Machinists union launching a campaign to stop it.

Seeing that a key source for the funds to pay back the loans — concessions from the Machinists — was unlikely to materialize, most bankers pulled out and the deal collapsed October 13. UAL's stock went into a freefall, triggering the second biggest one-day drop in stock prices ever on the New York Stock Exchange.

## ALPA sought buyout since 1987

The attempt by ALPA officials at United to buy the airline started in April 1987 with a \$4.5 billion offer. United was then a subsidiary of a diversified company, the Allegis Corp.

According to the *New York Times*, United Master Executive Council Chairman Frederick Dubinsky said the scheme to buy the airline began after a 29-day strike by the pilots



Militant/Nancy Brown

Ramp workers, cleaners, mechanics, and other Machinists union members at United, inspired by the Eastern strike, opposed takebacks demanded for buyout deal. Above, IAM Local 1759 members, who work for United at Dulles International Airport, joined Eastern strikers for a "walk-through" of National Airport near Washington, D.C., August 25.

in 1985 pushed back company demands to establish a permanent "B scale" for all pilots. Instead, the lower pay scale was instituted for newly hired first and second officers, not captains, for a five-year period.

The 1987 buyout attempt was motivated by rumors that United was a potential takeover target and that the company was getting ready to ask for more concessions from the pilots.

Although the 1987 buyout did not go through, Dubinsky told the press that the move "was only a first step." He added that officials of the pilot's association were "committed to the purchase and control of the airline by all employees."

Over the next two years some \$40 million of ALPA's funds were committed to buyout plans. In the September 1989 agreement the UAL board said it would repay these funds to the union's investment bankers, lawyers, and stock ownership fund.

Since the original 1987 bid, the ALPA leadership has been as much a part of management in relation to trying to wrest concessions from the airline's employees as the UAL board. Their relationship to the Machinist and AFA union members has been the same: press them to make concessions so the deal can be financed. In fact, it was the role of the ALPA leadership on the management team that made the buyout deal so despicable. Workers expect the employers to try to squeeze more profits out of them, but not the officers of an organization who purport to represent employees.

## Eastern strike

One of the roadblocks the UAL board-ALPA team had not anticipated was that by the time the buyout proposal was ready, the ranks of the IAM and AFA at United were not the same people they had been earlier. They had become more self-confident as a result of the strike by 8,500 IAM brothers and sisters at Eastern, which began March 4, 1989.

As at United, management at Eastern faced sharpening competition in the industry and sought to cut costs to remain profitable. And over the past decade it had won concessions from workers at the company.

But early this year the unity and determination of the ramp workers, cleaners, mechanics, and other IAM members won official support from the Transport Workers Union to which Eastern's flight attendants belong, as well as the backing of ALPA. The attendants' and pilots' sympathy strikes backed the IAM and the airline was shut down.

For the first several months of the strike, ALPA, IAM, and TWU officials focused on finding a buyer for Eastern in an attempt to wrest control from the airline's owner Frank Lorenzo.

## Treacherous blow

When those plans failed, and Lorenzo pushed ahead with restarting Eastern's operations on a large scale as a nonunion operation in early July, the ALPA leadership dealt a treacherous blow to the strike.

In August ALPA President Henry Duffy and Eastern ALPA head Jack Bavis encouraged the pilots to find a way to end the strike.

Enough pilots crossed the picket lines to give Lorenzo the crews he needed to keep moving ahead with expanding the number of flights per day.

The November 22 decision by the ALPA Master Executive Council at Eastern to end the sympathy strike was another treacherous stab in the back to the Eastern strikers. The new Eastern ALPA head, Skip Copeland, said, "The time has come now to go back, help rebuild Eastern, and get on with our lives."

Denno says that the "solidarity demonstrated by the Eastern pilots shows them at their best." The finking-out on the strike, however, even more than the attempted buyout of United as Denno says, shows ALPA officials at their worst.

But the determination of the Eastern strikers, combined with the growing resistance of mine workers across the Appalachian coalfields, helped the Machinists at United see that they could also stand up to the demands and the pressure to concede. Because of this opposition, the IAM officialdom knew that it could not sell the ALPA-backed buyout to the union's members.

Machinists Vice-president John Peterpaul told the *New York Times* the buyout was a "transaction in which both the government and the employees are being abused." He added, "The tax benefits are effectively subsidizing a substantial windfall to management, the pilots, and ALPA, even though it is portrayed as an employee transaction."

IAM officials countered the leveraged buyout by asking the U.S. Labor Department to block the deal, threatening extended legal action, and initiating a public relations campaign.

Denno argues that the IAM officialdom is not in principle opposed to employee stock ownership plans. That's true and it has proposed such schemes on numerous occasions. But IAM officials don't have the same scope of opportunities, including financial assets, to easily succeed with buyout proposals or to win membership support for them as the ALPA officials do. The important fact in the UAL case is that the IAM officials did not support the buyout and fought against it. They were dealing with a membership that has been profoundly inspired by the Eastern strike.

Instead of joining the fight at Eastern, the ALPA Master Executive Council at United was concentrating on putting the buyout together. This diverted attention away from the struggle at Eastern to defend unions in the airline industry.

Rather than contributing to the Eastern strikers, especially to flight attendants who received no strike benefits, ALPA officials devoted their resources to the buyout deal.

## Pilots are a middle class layer

IAM members and ALPA pilots at United responded differently to the United buyout, just as the Eastern strike has been transforming a layer of IAM members in a way that is not true of the pilots. Behind this lies the fact that pilots are not workers, but a middle class layer.

Denno cautions against deciding, based on *Continued on Page 13*

## Reader disagrees on pilots

The main point of the article in the November 17 *Militant* on the United Airlines buyout is both true and important. The defeat of the buyout was a victory for workers brought about by determined opposition to concessions by IAM members. Many United workers understood this and more than a few workers watched with glee as their victory sent the stock market into a nosedive.

I disagree, however, with several other points made in the article. The article says that the pilots' association's support of the buyout reflected "the class differences between this layer of professionals and . . . wage workers in the airline industry."

I don't know whether airline pilots are professionals or highly skilled and highly paid wage workers, but I certainly wouldn't want to decide the question on the basis of the positions taken by the leadership of their organization.

The initial position of the IAM leadership was not opposition to any buyout and the concessions it would entail, but opposition to this particular plan. Many workers at various companies have been convinced by their union leadership that "buying the company" in one way or another is the only way out. The IAM leadership was quite willing to talk to Marvin Davis, one of the early bidders for United, to try to arrive at an acceptable deal. If they now oppose any concessions, that is the pressure of the ranks speaking.

Other statements in the article intended to back up the claim that pilots are not workers are equally flawed. That many pilots "invest in businesses, real estate, stock and bonds, or other money-making ventures" is undoubtedly true. It is also true of large layers of privileged

workers in the United States.

That "pilots earn salaries based on their monopoly of the profession" is also true, but that monopoly, and their salaries, are now under serious attack. Standards for hiring beginning pilots at the airlines have been reduced. I have spoken with recently hired pilots at major airlines who were earning less than I do working on an auto assembly line.

Finally, there is the claim that "pilots cannot produce more per hour. A plane can only fly a certain speed." I hope this was paraphrased from *Business Week* and just slipped by. It is unworthy of the *Militant*.

Trucks, buses, trains, and ships also generally travel at or near the maximum speed permitted by natural or technological conditions. Does that mean that truck and bus drivers, locomotive engineers, and ferry boat pilots cannot be subjected to speedup? We all know better.

In fact, airline pilots are beginning to experience a major form of speedup, with serious safety consequences. This is the introduction of the computerized, two-person cockpit. Most airliners now being built use this design, instead of the three-person crew required by the older planes that still make up most of the fleet.

The article correctly puts the defeat of the United buyout plan in the context of the strike by the IAM against concessions at Eastern Airlines. The solidarity demonstrated by Eastern pilots (and flight attendants) shows them at their best. A "successful" buyout of United, with the pilots participating, would certainly show them at their worst.

Dean Denno  
Oakland, California



# S. Africa

## ongress

able. We don't see any reason why property should be destroyed where it can be spared without compromising principle.

"And most certainly in South Africa, if circumstances should emerge that favor peaceful resolution of conflict we would definitely take advantage of them," Mnumzana stressed. "This however, is still not the case, and this is why we say the struggle in all its forms must continue."

Referring to recent talks held between the Soviet and the U.S. governments on "world peace" and the resolution of "regional conflicts," Mnumzana said, "The struggle for national liberation cannot be separated from the struggle for global peace, for economic and social progress around the world."

"If improving relations between superpowers does not entail compromising principles that animate national liberation struggles around the world," Mnumzana explained, "or does not entail a compromise of principles that are behind efforts to construct a more democratic, a more prosperous, a more peaceful world, then we have nothing against such improved relations."

"But if the improvement of relations between superpowers directly compromises the principles we hold dear," the ANC leader said, "as people involved in the national liberation struggle, as people involved in the struggle for peace, prosperity, freedom, and democracy around the world, then of course we would have to disapprove of such improvements."

Mnumzana described how the growing international capitalist economic crisis is affecting the South African regime.

### Economic crisis in South Africa

South Africa is integrated into the advanced capitalist economies "in a very, very intimate way," he pointed out. South Africa



Militant/Selva Nebbia

Namibians celebrate SWAPO election victory in streets of Windhoek November 14

supplies natural resources like diamonds, gold, and platinum — which is very important in precision engineering and especially in the arms industry — to the industrialized countries.

"So that once the Western economies begin to go through an arduous phase," Mnumzana indicated, "the consequences are felt in South Africa."

These consequences are compounded by the impact of the international sanctions that, under the pressure of the anti-apartheid movement, have been imposed against trading with South Africa.

In practical terms, what does this mean for South Africa?

"Because apartheid is an oppressive regime that can only survive by ensuring that the lives of its victims are totally regimented, minute to minute, it needs a very huge administrative bureaucracy, both at the civilian and military level," Mnumzana remarked.

Under ideal circumstances, the regime needs an economy that is healthy enough to provide it with the funds for the maintenance of that bureaucracy, Mnumzana pointed out. "And of course as the South African economy becomes sicker and sicker, it is less and less able to finance the bureaucracy both at the

civilian and the military level," he added.

"Beyond the bureaucracy, apartheid has to maintain an inordinately huge police force as well as the defense force. And as South Africa's economic crisis deepens, as it is doing, Pretoria is less and less able to pay for the maintenance of its police and military force at adequate levels," he explained.

### White support of apartheid

"In 1948 when the Nationalist Party rode to power through all-white elections, one of its objectives was to eliminate the category of poor whites by raising the standard of living for all whites, especially the Afrikaners," Mnumzana said.

"It saw this as the most effective way of retaining white support for apartheid, through material incentives of the most comprehensive nature. But today due to the economic crisis of apartheid — which is in part a reflection of the international economic crisis of capitalism, but also a consequence of sanctions — Pretoria is no longer able to maintain the standard of living for whites at their traditional level."

As a result, the category of poor whites has reemerged in South Africa, explained Mnumzana. "And, of course, this compounds the political problems of apartheid, because

this increasing number of poor whites are beginning to say: Of what use is apartheid to us if it cannot guarantee us economic well-being?"

Poor whites "begin to look for alternatives to apartheid," Mnumzana pointed out. "Of course, this does not necessarily mean, that they then become inclined towards the Mass Democratic Movement or the ANC. It doesn't mean that they automatically swing into positions of opposition to apartheid.

"The lowest economic strata of the white economic community are fragmenting in three directions," commented Mnumzana. With some swinging to the extreme right, others "man the middle ground of confusion," yet others are moving to the left. And for the first time in South Africa white workers — including some shop stewards — are joining nonracial trade unions made up mostly of Black workers.

Though not in great numbers, over the past two years a growing number of white workers from industries such as metal, commercial-catering, and rail have been joining the nonracial trade unions. In the rail industry white workers have traditionally been protected by the state. Workers who are white make up 40 percent of the work force in rail, an unusually high figure for South African industry.

White workers joining nonracial unions reinforces the trend by white youth to move away from apartheid, explained the ANC leader. And it strengthens the tendency to affiliate with structures in the Mass Democratic Movement, to come directly to the ANC, to refuse to be conscripted into the South African Defense Force, and to offer their services to the national liberation movement.

### Impact on Black workers

How do the growing economic difficulties affect workers who are Black?

"When you refer to Black workers it's always important to remember you are referring to a work force close to 50 percent of which is permanently unemployed," said Mnumzana. "And a significant proportion consists of seasonal workers, people who are at one moment employed, at another moment unemployed."

"And when you refer to those who are employed, either seasonally, or on a permanent basis, which is slightly more than 50 percent of the total Black work force, you are referring to people who earn salaries that are far below the international poverty data line. These are people who earn slave wages," Mnumzana explained.

"In other words, for them employment under apartheid has not exactly been a bed of roses. These are people who are used to suffering, whose entire experience under apartheid is suffering."

"For them it's not a question of whether there is additional suffering, the question is: Is there a purpose behind that suffering? and the answer is, yes there is a purpose because this extra suffering is going to accelerate the destruction of apartheid and bring forward the day of liberation."

"In sum, the economic crisis of apartheid spells an even more serious, an even more profound political crisis for the regime."

## Namibia's constituent assembly meets

### BY RONI McCANN

"The Namibian people have entrusted upon us a very heavy responsibility, collectively and individually," Hage Geingob, a leader of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia, told the new constituent assembly at its first session November 21. "They have mandated us to hammer out and adopt, in a spirit of compromise, a spirit of give and take, a constitution that will launch our country and people into nationhood."

"Our country, our people, indeed the whole world is at the moment in a state of anxious suspense, awaiting the outcome of our work," said Geingob, who was elected chair of the constituent assembly.

Geingob was election director for SWAPO, the leading liberation organization that has long fought for Namibia's freedom from South African colonial domination. In early November Namibia held its first-ever elections in which all adults could cast a vote. SWAPO won the majority of seats to the constituent assembly, charged with the task of adopting a constitution and setting a date for independence.

The elections were a phase of the independence plan to free Namibia from apartheid's 74-year rule. The plan was outlined in United Nations Resolution 435, adopted in 1978. The resolution was implemented this year after Pretoria's military forces were defeated at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola, forcing them to the negotiating table.

### Assembly meets

The votes cast by Namibians in the elections awarded SWAPO 41 seats in the assembly. SWAPO leaders elected to the body

included President Sam Nujoma; Secretary for Information and Publicity Hidipo Hamutenya; Ben Ulenga, head of the Mineworkers Union of Namibia; and Gertrud Kandaga, chairperson of the SWAPO Women's Council and central committee member.

Shouts of "Viva SWAPO" filled the air as Nujoma and others arrived at the Tintenpalast in Windhoek for the first day of deliberations. A sea of SWAPO supporters and journalists swarmed the steps of the palace as Nujoma entered, his fist raised, saluting the crowd.

After Geingob was elected chair during the morning session, he turned the floor over to Nujoma who made a statement on behalf of SWAPO calling on all assembly members, 67 men and five women from various parties, to cooperate in the body's work.

Nujoma said one of the main tasks was to create a Namibia where all its people could form a nation, regardless of race and ethnic origin, and to work for proper education, health care, and security for all.

### 1982 principles adopted

During the afternoon session, SWAPO Foreign Secretary Theo-Ben Gurirab, proposed the assembly adopt the 1982 constitutional principles as a framework for the constitution it will be drafting. According to the South African Press Association, this swiftly defused what had been predicted to be a major disagreement among assembly members.

The principles propose that Namibia be a unitary, democratic state with a bill of rights and an independent judiciary, among other provisions.

"The impression — a wrong one — was created as if somehow SWAPO was opposed

to the principles," said Gurirab.

Gurirab's proposal was adopted unanimously by the assembly members, and then they adjourned.

The week before the assembly met a wave of violence against SWAPO supporters in the north of Namibia was reported. A SWAPO press release states that between November 14–16 more than 60 people were injured. SWAPO member Gideon Mbudhi was stabbed on November 14 during a clash with members of the South African-backed Democratic Turnhalle Alliance armed with knives, sticks, and rifles. One DTA member was killed.

That night a group of 30 heavily armed police raided the home of businessman Eliakim Namundjebo, seriously beating several SWAPO leaders and detaining them without charge.

A December 1 press release states that members of Kopano ya Tou, a group of ex-members of the hated Koevoet paramilitary forces who support the DTA, were being rearmed and issued new uniforms at the Mpacha airbase in eastern Caprivi.

A United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) commander, Casper Brown, when asked why there was no investigation of the radio call to arm the members, replied that he preferred to wait for an official confirmation. Besides, he stated, it was not UNTAG's job to investigate, just to monitor the independence process.

The last of South Africa's troops, some 1,500, have begun withdrawing from military bases in Namibia. Resolution 435 calls for full withdrawal of South African forces within seven days of certification of the election results.



Militant  
While there is a housing shortage of 80,000 units in Managua, landlords were evicting tenants.

BY JUDY WHITE

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "The courts were ordering one eviction after another in Managua," explained Bertha Rosa Flores, a deputy of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in the National Assembly who sits on the body's housing committee. The result was growing public controversy earlier this year, and even some confrontations over eviction attempts.

To cool things down, the assembly voted at the end of August to freeze virtually all legal proceedings regarding urban landlord-tenant conflicts for a period of 180 days. The assembly simply decided, said Flores, "to park this problem for a little while."

The moratorium on evictions will last until just after the elections, which are scheduled for February. At that time, according to Flores, the newly elected assembly will begin work on a comprehensive housing law. Neither the FSLN nor the other parties represented in the assembly have yet spelled out proposals for such a law.

A bill proposing the temporary halt to evictions was sent to the assembly by President Daniel Ortega last April, at a time when some working people in Managua were organizing protests against court rulings ordering them to leave houses they had been occupying.

One such case, which received extensive publicity, involved a building being used as a health clinic in one of the city's working-class neighborhoods. A municipal judge had issued an order returning the building to its previous owner.

In protest of the order, local residents occupied the building. They refused to recognize the validity of the order because, they charged, the owner had been a member of the National Guard, the armed forces of the Somoza dictatorship overthrown in 1979.

Two days after the health clinic occupation began, Managua Mayor Carlos Carrión stepped in and declared the building "of public necessity," thereby putting it under government jurisdiction.

Community residents organized a spontaneous celebration. "This decision is one more sign that the revolution defends what is just," Celia del Socorro Moraga told *Barricada*, the FSLN's daily, as she joined the victory party.

#### Hundreds of lawsuits

Following Ortega's submission of the moratorium bill to the National Assembly in April, the number of landlords seeking court-ordered evictions shot up, according to published reports. Managua judges reported the filing of "hundreds of lawsuits."

Some of these disputes turned into confrontations. On August 9 when a judge attempted to serve an eviction order in one neighborhood she was met by flying bottles thrown by the residents of the house, who had been living there for 10 years. The judge retreated, complaining that the police had not sent a patrol car to aid in carrying out the eviction.

The following day *Barricada* printed a statement from Mayor Carrión's office saying that it could not intervene in cases of evictions.

Many homes belonging to *somocistas* were confiscated following the victory of the 1979 revolution here. The government also took over administration of houses with mortgages held by banks and real estate developers.

In 1980 the government decreed rent reductions of 50 to 60 percent. For many renters, the maximum annual rent was set at 5 percent of the declared value of the dwelling. With accelerating inflation, the actual rents paid by many tenants declined to very low

amounts.

Some landlords began renting homes in dollars. Although illegal, this practice has become widespread.

Various explanations have been put forward here of why conflicts between landlords and tenants have been on the rise.

According to Bertha Rosa Flores, the FSLN deputy, "Right now there are a number of citizens who have returned to the country — former members of Somoza's National Guard, people who were linked to the *somocistas*." Those people are "asking for their real estate back," and they are ready to take legal steps to regain it, she said.

Humberto Cornejo has a different explanation. He is the mayor's representative in the Fourth District of Managua, a working-class area. Cornejo said there are "very few cases" in his district of *somocistas* demanding the return of their property.

He thinks the Assembly discussion around the moratorium itself triggered the rise in disputes over housing, as landlords rushed to get court rulings before any freeze was enacted.

Vladimir Norori, a representative of the

mayor's office in Managua's Sixth District, thinks it was the action of the city district offices in beginning to investigate and legalize the situation of many tenants that was stimulating the disputes. This task was begun in early 1989.

As city officials surveyed the housing situation, Norori said, they found families who had been occupying homes for a number of years but who had no legal status there. Government policy is to "favor the family that is living in the house," Norori stated, "because our starting point is that housing should be for those who need it." This stance, he said, led landlords to take court action to try to evict occupants.

During the debate in the National Assembly on the draft law there was divided opinion.

Clemente Guido, head of the Conservative Democratic Party caucus, said the bill "violated the agreements between President Ortega and the political parties" that had been signed early in August. According to Guido those agreements included government "guarantees on the forms of property that are not subject to expropriation."

Guido also described the proposed law as an "electoral" move designed to "win votes" for the FSLN.

"The truth is that this is not an electoral move," FSLN deputy Flores explained. The freeze meets "an objective problem."

The city of Managua currently has a housing deficit of 80,000 units, according to figures made public by Mayor Carrión. This deficit is increasing by an estimated 12,000 units a year.

The government has distributed lots, and at times construction materials, to some of the homeless. Last year 1,500 lots were distributed in Managua. This distribution has apparently increased in 1989. Although overall figures for the year are not available, Norori reported that 1,300 lots were given out in the Sixth District alone between January and August. This is where much of the city's expansion is taking place.

"The lots or houses built on them cannot be sold," Norori said. "The people can live there as long as they want but if they abandon the land, it reverts to the mayor's office for reassignment to another family. We don't want housing to become a business again."

## East German officials' privileges exposed

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Disclosures of corruption, abuse of power, profiteering, and accumulated privileges by East German Socialist Unity Party officials have further shaken the party's already plummeting authority. (The SUP is East Germany's Stalinist Communist Party.)

The revelations come on the heels of massive demonstrations that have rocked the Stalinist regime in recent weeks. Banners carried by protesters have called for officials to be tried and punished for their crimes. In an attempt to shore up the party's credibility, even the official party press has printed exposés of the wrongdoings.

Wandlitz, a secluded and guarded compound of 23 houses on the outskirts of Berlin for the party's top echelon, has stirred indignation throughout the country. East German reporters and camera crews allowed into the complex disclosed such amenities as a swimming pool, a greenhouse, gardeners, maids, a tailor, a beauty parlor, and a store stocked with a variety of quality consumer goods not available to the general public.

According to the *Berliner Zeitung*, party officials had procured posh housing not just for themselves, but for their children and other family members. The report also revealed that the spacious houses were furnished with expensive imported tile and wood. The wife of one party official was said to have ordered an Italian tile floor, only to have it ripped up and redone.

Just a few weeks after becoming the new party chief in October, Egon Krenz checked out of his spacious home in Wandlitz and moved into a bungalow in the Berlin borough of Pankow. Krenz, who was formerly the internal security minister, had also forsaken his Volvo for a more modest, East German-built car. Many East Germans have begun calling Wandlitz Volvograd in disdain for the chauffeur-driven Swedish cars and privileges of the officialdom. Most East Germans face several-year waits before being able to purchase inferior quality East German autos.

*Junge Welt* reported that party Politburo members were paid 4,735 marks (US\$2,250) a month, more than four times the average East German wage.

Other examples of how the most privileged layer lives have also been reported by *Neues*

Deutschland, the official SUP paper.

Near the town of Gotha in Thuringia an ousted party secretary maintained a 700,000 mark (US\$333,000) hunting lodge. At a cost of 1.1 million marks, the official had an asphalt road laid into the preserve to his lodge, the party daily reported. "We would have preferred to put the road where it was needed," a senior forest ranger said.

A chief aide to former party leader Erich

Honecker set up a dummy corporation that milked hard currency earnings from East German enterprises that exported valuable antiquities and books to capitalist countries. The official used hard currency to bribe directors of enterprises to go along with his scheme, the *Berliner Zeitung* disclosed. Gerhard Beil, the foreign trade minister, said that the dummy corporation in effect broke through the state's monopoly of foreign trade.

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PM reports on the Eastern Airlines strikers' determination to continue their fight, more than nine months after they first walked out.



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# E. Europe protests press fight for rights

Continued from front page  
currency under the cover of darkness.

New revelations show that Politburo members each collected 20,000 marks (US\$9,500) a year as "honorary members" of a vague entity called the Construction Academy in the Ministry for Construction.

A special SUP conference called for December 18 will elect a new leadership and reorganize the party. One party leader called the mass resignation a "desperate gamble" to shore up the disintegrating party and avert the end of the SUP's rule, which now appears inevitable.

## Czechoslovak protests continue

In Czechoslovakia, 200,000 angry demonstrators converged on Prague's Wenceslas Square on December 4. They demanded the government implement concessions agreed to after daily protests of hundreds of thousands and a two-hour general protest strike at the end of November. The opposition front, Civic Forum, has called for further demonstrations and workers are preparing for another countrywide protest strike.

Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec's appointment of a new cabinet dominated by CP members and President Gustav Husak's refusal to resign has angered opposition leaders, who had suspended the massive protests after the government promised to grant concessions. Husak is the last of the "old guard" Czechoslovak CP officials remaining in office. The regime has stalled writing into law the rights of free association, speech, and assembly.

Student leaders reversed an earlier decision to scale back their strikes and campus occupations. Actors and other performers called off the reopening of theaters and concert halls. Since last month, the cultural centers have been used as forums for meetings and discussions by the many groups that make up the opposition.

## New strike prepared

Factory strike committees, which remained on alert after the November 27 strike, are now preparing to strike on December 11 if the government does not meet the opposition's demands. "It's the only way for citizens to show what they want," a worker at Prague's CKD machine works told an Associated Press reporter.

Bowing to the opposition's demands, the regional Czech government surrendered nine of 17 cabinet seats to non-Communists.

## An appeal to defenders of democratic rights

Thousands of dollars are urgently needed to cover the costs of defending a victory by the Socialist Workers Party for democratic rights. On August 15 federal judge Mariana Pfaelzer in Los Angeles found in favor of the Socialist Workers Party in a 10-year harassment lawsuit waged by Alan Gelfand and the Workers League. On November 13 Pfaelzer rejected a motion by Gelfand to "amend" the court's findings. An appeal by Gelfand and the Workers League is anticipated.

Defenders of the constitutional right to freedom of association, opponents of the use of courts to bleed and divert the resources of working-class organizations, and all who have come to recognize the importance of pushing back the disruption operations of the Workers League have a stake in joining to end this violation of democratic rights.

Everyone who supports this fight can help by sending a contribution to help cover the costs of fighting the Workers League appeal.

Tax-deductible contributions can be sent to the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc., a nonprofit foundation, at P.O. Box 761, Church Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10007.

Copies of the court ruling can be obtained for \$5 from the Political Rights Defense Fund at the same address.

Czechoslovakia is a federation of the Czech and Slovak republics. Two-thirds of Czechoslovakia's population of 15 million lives in the Czech Republic. The concession puts increased pressure on the federal government.

Workers are considering how to consolidate their gains and carve out further space to press the struggle to defend their interests, including against the consequences of implementing capitalist-style methods such as layoffs, cuts in social benefits, and price hikes. Representatives of industrial workers have now called for the strike committees to become the base of a trade union movement independent of CP-dominated labor organizations.

## Blow to illusion

Contrary to the euphoric proclamations of the capitalist media and imperialist politicians, socialism is not in its death agony. The popular protest movements in Eastern Europe are dealing a blow to the illusion that these "Communist" parties and their "socialist" polices have something to do with socialism or communism.

What exists in Eastern Europe are societies in transition that have had their development toward socialism blocked.

In Russia capitalist property relations were overturned and the factories, mills, mines, and natural resources were nationalized in massive struggles by working people led by the Bolshevik Party in the October 1917 revolution.

The capitalist rulers were expropriated and nationalized property relations established in Eastern Europe following the Soviet Red Army's defeat of imperialist Germany in World War II.

## Socialist consciousness

This transformation of social relations and property forms provided a foundation from which the competition of capitalism could be replaced by the solidarity and cooperation of working people as they transform themselves by building a new socialist society. Nationalized property forms and economic planning mechanisms can not automatically lead in this direction, however. A politically conscious and active working class whose vanguard are members of a communist party dedicated to advancing society as a whole is decisive to building socialism.

The communists of V.I. Lenin's time viewed the strength of the Russian revolution as intimately tied to helping advance the cause of working people around the world. To proclaim its internationalism to the world, the Bolshevik Party renamed itself the Communist Party and helped found the Communist International.

With this consciousness and understanding of the world, working people in the Soviet Union set out to forge socialism using the gains they had won in 1917. But this process was cut short by a growing privileged social layer of officeholders and administrators that had a base in the state apparatus.

Feeding off the exhaustion and demoralization among working people brought about by failures of revolutions in other countries,

## Philippines army coup shakes three-year-old Aquino regime

### Continued from front page

The White House immediately issued a statement of "unequivocal support" for the Aquino government and condemned the "efforts to destabilize" the regime.

U.S. forces were deployed from Clark Air Force base, one of several U.S. bases in the Philippines and the largest U.S. air facility outside the United States. There are 40,000 U.S. troops, military dependents, and defense department civilians stationed in that country.

Following the U.S. intervention, rebel troops withdrew from the television stations and from Villamor Air Force Base. But ignoring Aquino's demand that they surrender, rebels invaded Camp Aguinaldo, the Philippine army national headquarters, and moved to Makati.

The Philippine Red Cross said December 6 that 74 people had been killed in the fighting so far, more than in the worst previous coup attempt against the Aquino government. Some 500 were reported wounded.

the bureaucracy consolidated its position. A violent and bloody counterrevolution against the working class and its communist leadership was finally carried out by this privileged stratum led by Joseph Stalin.

## Privileged caste

Upon consolidating its power, this privileged caste, which skimmed off a significant part of the wealth created by the labor of working people, usurped the trappings of the revolution. The name, Communist Party, was retained, but the organization ceased to be a voluntary association of the most politically conscious workers and fighters.

It became a job trust, an organization one had to join in order to climb the ladder of rank and privilege. Having pushed the working class out of politics, the bureaucracy began dominating the Soviet Union — and later Eastern Europe — by organizational measures, decrees, regimentation, and terror.

## A crisis of the bureaucracy

The crisis now exploding in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is the crisis of this bureaucratic layer, not of socialism. Stagnating economies, lagging labor productivity, mismanagement, corruption, and declining living standards are the result of the bureaucracy's inherent inability to lead these societies toward socialism.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, the foremost spokesman of the Soviet bureaucracy, proposed *perestroika* and *glasnost* in the mid-1980s to cope with these problems and to avoid a repeat of the Polish workers' rebellion in 1980–81. The bureaucratic regimes in Eastern Europe are now also adopting policies similar to those proposed by Gorbachev.

## Piecemeal measures

*Perestroika* is not a program or a coherent series of proposals as such. It is pragmatic piecemeal measures focused on using more capitalist market methods and incentives to try to stimulate economic growth and productivity in the hopes of spurring an economic revival.

Profitability and greater competition among workers and between enterprises have been implemented under the slogan of *perestroika*. Dictatorial restraints on some forms of political activity have been lifted under *glasnost* — "openness." This has been aimed especially at encouraging greater support and contributions from the huge layer of technocrats, as well as to win acceptance from workers for economic measures.

Capitalist-style methods will not produce an economic revival and social stability, but will stir workers who are already squeezed by economic stagnation to resist and fight.



## WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

### Congress Party loses in Indian elections

In national elections at the end of November in India, the governing Congress Party lost its parliamentary majority.

While it won at least 190 seats, four opposition parties won slightly more than the 263 seats needed to form a majority government.

Based on nearly complete results, the Janata Dal, or People's Party, won 137 seats; the Bharatiya Janata, or Indian People's Party, won 86; the Communist Party of India-Marxist won 32; and the Communist Party of India won 11.

The four parties backed an electoral coalition, called the National Front, in order to defeat the Congress Party.

The political perspectives of the coalition range from the conservative Bharatiya Janata to the two Communist parties. The Bharatiya Janata appeals to Hindu fundamentalists and advocates Indian possession of nuclear weapons as a defense against China and Pakistan.

Congress Party leader and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi resigned following the announcement of the vote totals. In 1984 he had led the Congress Party to win an overwhelming 415-seat parliamentary majority. That vote came following the assassination of his mother, Indira Gandhi, who was prime minister at the time.

Gandhi's grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru, also held the post of prime minister for many years. The Congress Party has dominated parliament for all but five of the 42 years since independence was won in 1947.

Gandhi's administration has been rocked with corruption scandals for several years. In addition, a business boom that increased prosperity for a small layer of the population did not alleviate the miserable conditions of the big majority of workers and peasants. In a country of 810 million, at least half the population does not earn enough to meet basic human needs, including minimal food intake.

### Khmer Rouge steps up attacks in Cambodia

Following the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia at the end of September, military forces of the Khmer Rouge, directed by Pol Pot, stepped up their attacks inside the country.

The Vietnamese troops had been there since 1979 when they helped Cambodian resistance fighters topple the Pol Pot regime, responsible for the deaths of more than a million Cambodians in the Southeast Asian country. Cambodia's population today is nearly 7 million.

The former dictator's military forces began an offensive from Thailand November 20. The assaults came four days after an overwhelming majority in the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for the formation of a new government in Cambodia that would include the Khmer Rouge.

The U.S. government and its allies have enforced diplomatic and economic isolation on Cambodia for the past 10 years. Washington had insisted on the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops as a precondition for normalization of relations.

But even with the troop pullout it continues to give military and diplomatic support to Pol Pot, and press its allies to do likewise. Last month the U.S. State Department officially protested Britain's decision to send a diplomat to Cambodia to supervise the distribution of some British aid.

Britain, which has acknowledged the Vietnamese troop withdrawal, has decided to send \$390,000 of aid to non-governmental organizations in Cambodia.

A British official said that London would take note of Washington's views, but would probably proceed with the plan.

### Leaders of opposition killed in Sri Lanka

The founder and central leader of the left-wing People's Liberation Front (JVP) in Sri Lanka was assassinated while in the custody of the military.

The JVP said that Rohana Wijeweera was captured, interrogated, and shot by security forces November 12. The military says that six other JVP leaders were also killed the same week.

The JVP, based primarily among the majority Sinhalese population, has for many years waged a struggle against government policies.

The banned organization opposed the government's decision in 1987 to ask India to send in troops to suppress the struggle of the Tamil people in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. The JVP said the move was a violation of the country's sovereignty.

Sri Lanka is an island country of 16.6 million people located off India's southern coast. Tamils are an oppressed minority in Sri Lanka. Since 1983 Tamil guerrillas have fought for an independent homeland.

More than 6,000 people have been killed in the past two years in the fighting between the government and the JVP.

While the government claims most were killed by the JVP, human rights organizations and opposition politicians say the government and pro-government vigilantes are responsible for many of the deaths.

# CALENDAR

## ARIZONA

### Phoenix

**The Crisis in Eastern Europe Today.** Speaker: Elizabeth Lariscy, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 16, 7 p.m. 1809 W Indian School Rd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 279-5850.

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**Defend the Pathfinder Mural and Artistic Freedom.** Speakers: Eva Cockcroft, muralist; Jim Prighoff, authority on mural art; Richard Wyatt, muralist. Slideshow on Pathfinder Mural. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 16. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Photography Center, 412 S Park View. Donation: \$5. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

## FLORIDA

### Miami

**The Crisis in Eastern Europe: A Socialist Perspective.** Speaker: Pete Seidman, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 1126. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**The Struggle in the Philippines Today.** Speakers: Heather Gray, political activist, recently returned from the Philippines; Ellen Berman, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 2665. Sat., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

**The "Failure of Socialism" and the Prospects for Communism.** Speaker: Representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Behind the Crisis in Eastern Europe.** Speaker: Estelle DeBates, member Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322.

## IOWA

### Des Moines

**Celebrate the Publication of Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.** Speakers: Ako Abdul-Samad, African American Islamic Association; Jonathan Narcisse, publisher *Des Moines Citizen Weekly*; Emmanuel Sikabwe, African Studies Association, Iowa State University; Valerie Warnsby, Delta Sigma Theta, Drake University; representative Pathfinder Bookstore. Sun., Dec. 10. Reception, 2 p.m.; program, 3 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (515) 246-8249.

## MARYLAND

### Baltimore

**U.S. Hands Off El Salvador!** Speakers: Julio Christales, international representative FENASTRAS trade union federation of El Salvador; Glen Swanson, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers of America Local 3185; Dr. Jim Lewis, Howard County Friends of Peace in Central America; Peter Melberg, Balti-

more Central America Solidarity Committee; representative, Washington Area Labor Committee for Central America and the Caribbean. Sat., Dec. 9. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2, dinner \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**Celebrate the Completion of the Pathfinder Mural.** Hosted by Michigan Gallery. Sun., Dec. 17, 5 p.m. 2661 Michigan Ave. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (313) 961-7867 or 831-1177.

## MISSOURI

### St. Louis

**Celebrate the Publication of In Defense of Socialism by Fidel Castro.** Speakers: Kim Jayne, activist in El Salvador solidarity movement; Ted Braun, Cuba solidarity activist. Sat., Dec. 16. Social, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

## NEBRASKA

### Omaha

**The Protests in Eastern Europe and the Fight for Communism.** Speakers: Joan Paltrineri, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 271; Michael Moller, assistant professor of philosophy, Augustana College, representative of Social Democratic Party of East Germany. Sat., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. Translation to Spanish. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

**Celebrate the Publication of Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.** Speakers: Rowena Moore, president and founder of the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation; Dr. George Garrison, head of Black Studies, University of Nebraska, Omaha; Shellia Kennedy, Young Socialist Alliance; Erich Christiansen, Youth for Peace. Sat., Dec. 19, 7 p.m. Omaha Business Technology Center, 24th and Lake. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Celebrate the Publication of In Defense of Socialism by Fidel Castro.** Speakers: Zayid Muhammad, Frontline Artists; Wantu Zenzile, African National Congress of South Africa Youth Section; representative of South West Africa People's Organisation; Natasha Terlexis, Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Dec. 9. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

**Eastern Machinists and Miners on Strike.** Video on Pittston miners' strike. Speakers: members of International Association of Machinists and United Mine Workers of America on strike. Sat., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

## NEW YORK

### Brooklyn

**The Political Crisis in Grenada Today.** Speakers: Don Rojas, former press secretary to Prime Minister Maurice Bishop; Wilton DeCoteau, North American representative of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement. Translation to Spanish and French. Mon., Dec. 11, 7 p.m. Gold Room, 6th floor, Student Union Bldg.

**MARYLAND: Baltimore:** 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

**MASSACHUSETTS: Boston:** 605 Massachusetts Ave. Zip: 02118. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

**MICHIGAN: Detroit:** 5019½ Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

**MINNESOTA: Austin:** 407½ N. Main. Zip: 55912. Tel: (507) 433-3461. **Twin Cities:** 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

**MISSOURI: Kansas City:** 5534 Troost Ave. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 444-7880. **St. Louis:** 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Zip: 63113. Tel: (314) 361-0250.

**NEBRASKA: Omaha:** 140 S. 40th St. Zip: 68131. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

**NEW JERSEY: Newark:** 141 Halsey. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

**NEW YORK: Brooklyn:** 464 Bergen St. Zip: 11217. Tel: (718) 398-6983. **New York:** 191 7th Ave. Zip: 10011. Tel: (212) 675-6740.

**NORTH CAROLINA: Greensboro:** 2219 E Market. Zip: 27401. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

**OHIO: Cleveland:** 2521 Market Ave. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150. **Columbus:** P.O. Box 20297. Zip: 43202.

**OREGON: Portland:** 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Zip: 97212. Tel: (503) 287-7416.

on Campus Rd., Brooklyn College. Sponsors: Black Student Union, Caribbean Student Union; Grenada Foundation, *Haïti Progrès*, others.

## Manhattan

**Celebration of Recent Victories in South Africa and Namibia.** Featured speaker: Alfred Nzo, secretary general of African National Congress of South Africa. Thurs., Dec. 14, 8 p.m. Canaan Baptist Church, 132 W 116th St. Sponsor: New York Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council. For more information call (212) 673-5120.

**U.S./Puerto Rico Solidarity Network Fund-Raising Party.** Sat., Dec. 16, 8 p.m. 209 W 97th St., Apt. 7-C. Donation: \$3. For more information call (212) 601-4751.

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Greensboro

**U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua!** Speaker: Rich Stuart, Socialist Workers Party, member United Transportation Union. Sun., Dec. 17, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**Celebrate the Publication of Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.** Speakers: Hakim Dawud; Venessa Watson, Sisters Remember Malcolm; Dr. C. Keto, Temple University; representative of Pathfinder Bookstore. Sat., Dec. 9, 7 p.m. 9 E Chelten Ave, 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (215) 848-5044.

### Pittsburgh

**U.S. Hands Off El Salvador!** Sat., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave., Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

## WEST VIRGINIA

### Charleston

**The Fight for Liberation in Southern Africa: A Historic Turning Point.** Panel discussion. Sat., Dec. 16, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

### Morgantown

**Speak Out Against Racist Attacks.** Build the Dec. 16 rally in Washington, Pa., against the KKK. Speakers: Ed Cabbell, social justice activist; Phil Carter, president Huntington NAACP, faculty Marshall University; Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Dec. 10, 4 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

**Behind the Historic Changes in Eastern Europe.** Speaker: Bernie Senter, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

## WISCONSIN

### Milwaukee

**Celebrate the Publication of In Defense of Socialism by Fidel Castro.** Panel discussion. Sat., Dec. 16. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

## AUSTRALIA

### Sydney

**The Crisis in Eastern Europe and the Soviet**

## The Fight Against Antilabor Disruption

Victory scored against the 10-year harassment suit by Alan Gelfand targeting the Socialist Workers Party.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**Speaker:** Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 9, 7 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

## UTAH

### Salt Lake City

**Speaker:** Greg Rosenberg, Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance; Sat., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

**Union.** Speaker: representative of Communist League. Fri., Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m. 181 Glebe Point Rd., 2nd floor. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (02) 692 0319.

## BRITAIN

### London

**The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis.** Premier showing of video by Hollywood director Nick Castle, Jr. Speakers: Millard Scott, Broadwater Farm Defence Committee; John Barrie, National Executive Committee member of National Union of Railwaymen; relative of Birmingham Six; representative of Transport and General Workers Union. Fri., Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Sponsor: London Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call 01-928 7947.

### Manchester

**The Fight for Freedom in El Salvador.** Speakers: representative of the FMLN-FDR of El Salvador; Tim Rigby, member National Union of Railways. Wed., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shude Hill. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 061-839 1766.

### Sheffield

**U.S. Miners on Strike.** Eyewitness report. Speakers: Paul Galloway and Jim Spaul, members of National Union of Miners. Wed., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. 2A Waverley House, 10 Joiner St. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 0742-729469.

## CANADA

### Montréal

**Eastern Europe: Failure of Communism or of Stalinism?** Speaker: Steve Penner, executive secretary Revolutionary Workers League. Sat., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

### Toronto

**Eastern Europe: Failure of Communism or of Stalinism?** Speaker: Steve Penner, executive secretary Revolutionary Workers League. Sat., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W, Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

## London

Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 01-401 2293.

**Manchester:** Unit 4, 60 Shude Hill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 061-839 1766.

**Sheffield:** 2A Waverley House, 10 Joiner St., Sheffield 3. Tel: 0742-729469.

## CANADA

### Montréal

Postal code: H2S 3C6. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

**Toronto:** 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400.

Postal code: M5V 1S8. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

**Vancouver:** 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102.

Privatize it — "We are all joyous at the scenes of people climbing on the [Berlin] Wall, but the



Harry  
Ring

problem is, how do you make money on this?" — Wall Street investment strategist Charles Clough.

Role model — Sir Denys Henderson, chairman of Britain's Imperial Chemical Industries, won a £100,000 wage hike, boosting his

yearly take to just under £480,000. Responding to carping critics, Sir Denys said it gave employees a salary to which they could aspire.

**Case of the subversive pasta** — The Israeli military is probing charges by Israeli companies against Abu Aitah, a food company in the West Bank town of Beit Sahour, scene of a tax defiance protest. It's charged that Abu Aitah is selling spaghetti in packages with red, black, white and green stripes — the colors of the Palestinian flag.

**The plot thickens** — Abu Aitah food products are marketed by an Israeli company which designed and provides the packag-

ing. Abu Aitah merely fills them with spaghetti.

**Half truth** — We reported on the South African troops and cops using savage dogs that are part wolf. In Australia, the *Sydney Morning Herald* illustrated the story with a cartoon of an officer hanging onto one of the dogs with a worried fellow saying, "He's half wolf!" The officer responds, "That's OK. I'm half human."

**Good thinking** — "The industry is having problems even before the economy slows down. What happens if there's a serious economic downturn?" — Broker Sandford Weil on the heavy drop in Wall Street business.

**Pfew!** — A trainload of sewage sludge returned to Baltimore after failing to find a place to unload. The city had contracted with a Louisiana waste treatment plant, but the smell was so bad officials would not let it be unloaded. Mississippi would not accept it either.

**Calling Dr. Freud** — Defying the evidence, and ordinary common sense, a Nuclear Regulatory Commission panel held that the asserted evacuation plan for the Seabrook nuke plant would work and that the plant should be licensed. A jubilant Edward Brown, prez of the company that runs the reactor, declared: "An absolute landmark. . . . The end is clearly at hand."

**Nostalgia buff** — "In the 20 years or so before its abolition in Britain, the system of putting a criminal to death had reached a degree of perfection that I believe is impossible to improve on." — Sydney Dernley, who was a hangman until Britain's death penalty was abolished 35 years ago.

**Wrong season** — "PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — The newspaper of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence has told politicians that if they want to advertise holiday greetings, they'll have to sign a declaration supporting a constitutional amendment against abortion. So far, politicians are refusing."

## UAL buyout bid highlights role of Machinists, pilots

Continued from Page 7

positions taken by the ALPA leadership, whether pilots are a professional layer or highly paid and highly skilled workers.

The assessment in the November 17 article that there is a class difference between pilots and workers was not deduced from the role of the ALPA officialdom in the United buyout.

No fighting worker would ever want to hold an individual pilot, flight attendant, ramp worker, mechanic, or other rank-and-file member of ALPA, the IAM, or the AFA responsible for the decisions and actions of the organization's leadership.

One of the problems in the November 17 article was that the terms "pilot" and "flight attendant" were used interchangeably and synonymously with the structures of their association and union. This seemed to assign responsibility to individual pilots for the actions of ALPA officials.

But Denno misses the point when he argues his position by noting that individual pilots may have smaller incomes than individual wage workers. Assessing pilots' social status can't be reduced to any one factor, including income.

Pilot's pay, although it varies widely, is high. A senior captain at Delta earns \$166,000 a year, while the same position at Continental brings \$102,000. Flight engineers, the job most pilots begin at, however, start at about \$20,000 a year.

Most airlines now have "B scales" where new hires begin at a lower rate. Scales generally merge after five years. Pilots are currently promoted to captain, the highest rank, within 10 years at some airlines — down from as much as 15 or 20 years five years ago.

Some newer pilots build up required flight time at small regional airlines. At some of these airlines turnover can be as high as 100 percent a year as pilots move into better-paying positions at the bigger companies.

Although Denno compares this entry level pay to that of an auto worker, no auto worker can hope to eventually earn \$100,000 a year on the assembly line. Even the most highly paid mechanics don't reach this income level.

Like other professions such as lawyers or doctors the first several years of practice can result in relatively small incomes compared even to some wage workers, but over time they can expect to make significantly more. That's why very few would ever trade their profession with a worker on an assembly line. Many workers though, would jump at the chance to be a pilot, doctor, or lawyer.

Denno correctly points out that pilots have a monopoly on their profession. While some workers such as plumbers, electricians, weld-

ers, and others also require licenses, the pilots maintain a tighter grip on their monopoly position.

Some of the restrictions on age, weight, height, sight, education, flight hours, race, and sex are being loosened. But this has only slightly eroded pilots' monopoly.

As long as these conditions still exist, pilots will receive incomes that reflect this monopoly position.

Moreover, this yearly income is far beyond what any pilot needs to provide for themselves and family. The extent of this is not comparable to "a large layer of privileged workers in the United States," as Denno argues.

One indication is the \$1.2 billion the 6,100 United pilots have in their own association's pension fund. This is a significant amount of money for such a small group of employees.

In addition, the extent of a pilot's investments mean that if laid off, or if they choose

to retire early, they can comfortably live on the income from stocks, bonds, businesses, or real estate. Their income as pilots often becomes a supplement to these larger holdings.

The ranking of pilots as captains, first officers, and second officers is a carry-over from the military where, until recently, most pilots at major airlines were trained and recruited from.

Pilots in the military are part of the reactionary officer corps. The traditions, ranking, and uniforms of civilian airline pilots come directly from the set-up in the armed forces.

Finally, Denno is correct in pointing out the error in the article, which said "pilots cannot produce more per hour." The example he points to of reducing cockpit crews is a good one. United pilots have protested the introduction of airliners flown with only two crew members in the cockpit.

Through their own actions the Machinists

members rebuffed the attempt to make them pay for the buyout through speed-up, lower wages, and worse working conditions.

The struggles of working people are inspiring nonunion workers at United as well. Machinists at the airline report that many are now discussing the need to join the union. Some have signed union cards.

The fact that after nine months some pilots at Eastern opposed the ALPA tops' decision to cross the Machinists' picket lines shows that some pilots can be won to the side of working-class struggles.

They can come to see their future tied to the struggles of working people rather than to the profit-grubbing of the bosses.

By taking a fighting stand against the employers' concessionary demands and approaching all pilots as people who can be brought into the fight, airline workers can put themselves in the best position to defend their unions today.

## 'Militant' sales teams to visit coalfields

Continued from front page

to find out more by reading the *Militant* and talking with socialist activists. Some workers who have been reading the paper have resubscribed and see the publication more and more as a weapon to help them understand the world and fight better.

*Militant* supporters — workers, some who have vacation time or who are laid off or on strike, students, and others — will be fanning out to coal towns and regions throughout the country.

Team members will be furnished with the *Militant* by the business office and will carry its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial* in case they meet up with workers who read only Spanish. They will also take copies of the Pathfinder pamphlet, *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* and the magazine *New International*. These will be supplied by Pathfinder bookstores from where the teams will be launched.

Informing miners and other workers about the frame-up of packinghouse worker, unionist, and political activist Mark Curtis and winning support for his defense effort will be a priority of sales teams.

### Team already out

An eight-day team is already on the road in southern West Virginia, heart of the eastern coalfields and a stronghold of the miners' union. At the first mine portal they went to 64 miners bought copies of the *Militant*. The team will visit Pittston strikers holding the line against the coal bosses in Logan County where unionists are busy putting the finishing touches on Camp Solidarity II.

Within the week another *Militant* sales team will head for southern Indiana and meet up with miners there and in neighboring Kentucky and Illinois. Southern Indiana miners and unionists have won a reputation as strong backers of the Pittston fight — raising some \$100,000 so far for UMWA strikers and actively building solidarity.

A sales team is planned for western Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia, home of UMWA districts 4, 5, and 31. It was here that scores of miners and others organized Pittston strike activities during the June six-

week walkout by 44,000 UMWA members in the eastern coalfields.

Supporters of the *Militant* in the Southwest, California, and the Pacific Northwest will be putting together teams to hit the western mining communities in Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, and Montana. A recent team to Arizona and New Mexico sold 48 *Militant* subscriptions to UMWA miners, and 14 to others, including rail workers, oil workers, and a member of the Communications Workers union.

The ability of volunteers to fan out east and west to boost the circulation of the *Militant* newspaper among fighters in the

coalfields — right now, over the next three weeks, and systematically until May — depends on readers of the *Militant*. Financial contributions by readers will be the bedrock of this effort to get the paper into the hands of miners and others with news on the Eastern strike, the struggle in southern Africa against apartheid, the fight of working people in Cuba to build socialism, and more.

Everybody can help insure the success of the campaign by sending a donation to the *Militant* at 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Volunteers to participate on any of the coalfield teams can call circulation director Norton Sandler at (212) 929-3486.

## —10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Dec. 14, 1979

The National Literacy Campaign is aimed at teaching more than 800,000 Nicaraguans to read and write. More than 200,000 volunteers are expected to participate in the teaching brigades.

The illiteracy rate at the time dictator Anastasio Somoza fled in July was 65 percent.

All the mass organizations led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front will be involved in the literacy campaign — Sandinista Defense Committees, Sandinista Workers Federation, Association of Nicaraguan Women, National Association of Nicaraguan Educators, Sandinista Children's Association, and others.

A demonstration and fiesta welcomed 100 Cuban teachers when they arrived in the city of Leon last month to aid the literacy drive.

In all, more than 1,000 Cuban teachers will spend two years in Nicaragua. At the send-off for the second contingent, Cuban President Fidel Castro told the teachers, "The country has suffered a great deal of destruction and they are in need of widespread international cooperation. Remember that on July 26 we made an appeal, a challenge, to send aid to Nicaragua. It's true that aid is being sent, but it's not enough to meet

the country's needs."

More than 29,000 teachers have applied for the mission in Nicaragua.

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

Dec. 14, 1964

One aspect of broader significance in the background of the events on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley is the connection between the student insurgency and the civil rights struggle.

Although the Free Speech Movement was called forth by campus grievances, it has been highly influenced by the Freedom Now movement. Some of its foremost organizers have participated in the San Francisco Bay Area civil rights actions and worked with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in the South. One of the main demands they insist upon involves the right of students to raise funds and prepare for off-campus civil rights activities without arbitrary interference by university authorities.

The Free Speech Movement supporters apply the sit-in techniques popularized by the civil rights forces. They sing Freedom Songs. They are imbued with the self-sacrificing militancy of young freedom fighters.

### Labor news in the *Militant*

The *Militant* stays on top of the most important developments in the labor movement. It has correspondents who work in the mines, mills, and shops where the events are breaking. You won't miss any of it if you subscribe. See the ad on page 2 of this issue for subscription rates.

# Eastern strike needs solidarity

Now is the time — as the strike at Eastern airlines enters its ninth month — for unionists around the country to take steps to reinforce the fight. This is especially true for workers, like those at Boeing, who have been directly aided by the determined struggle of the 8,500 ramp workers, cleaners, mechanics, and other members of the International Association of Machinists at Eastern.

After a 48-day strike some 58,000 IAM members at Boeing recently won their first wage increase in six years, reduced levels of forced overtime, and improved their cost-of-living escalator.

While Boeing's original offer October 4 did not contain any takebacks, the aircraft workers overwhelmingly rejected the offer and went on strike to force the company to give up more.

The company insisted for over a month that it had made its best offer. In early November it made a proposal that was even worse than the October offer and put pressure on strikers to see if they would break and return to work. But the company's tactics failed and the strike held strong. Boeing then knew it had to make a better offer to end the walkout.

Some Machinists felt that they had barely begun to fight and that, with added time on the picket lines, more could have been gotten from the company. This stand reflects the growing mood of resistance among U.S. workers who more and more are saying "enough" to concessions and even trying to make up some lost ground.

Understanding this, Boeing didn't demand concessions as it had in 1983 and 1986 because the company's owners knew it would have meant a fight.

Boeing's owners saw that Eastern owner Frank Lorenzo hasn't been able to do to the striking IAM members at Eastern what he did at Continental in 1983. At that time Lorenzo — within a matter of weeks — broke a strike by the Machinists, tore up the contract, and started up nonunion.

The Machinists' strike at Eastern, in contrast, has remained solid. The strikers have kept fighting and inspired other workers with confidence that they can do the same. The employers also see that the strikers mean business when they say they plan to stay out "one day longer" than Lorenzo. This pledge makes other employers think more seriously before launching attacks on wages and working conditions.

# Malta summit: there is no peace

The summit meeting between U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev concluded December 3 with great fanfare in the imperialist press. Reports heralded the end of the "cold war" and of superpower confrontation. Agreements on nuclear arms reduction and improved economic and trade ties between the United States and the Soviet Union were reached by the two heads of state.

While the Malta summit reflects the fact that the threat of an imperialist assault on the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe has been pushed back, Washington has no intention of seeking "peace" with workers and farmers around the world.

- On the eve of the summit a CIA plane carrying military equipment and supplies crashed near the southeastern town of Jamba in Angola, not far from where the UNITA counterrevolutionaries have their headquarters. It was a reminder that Washington has for more than 14 years backed, armed, and financed reactionary attempts to overthrow the Angolan government, which refuses to surrender its independence.

- As Bush headed for Malta, he gave orders to U.S. F-4 Phantom fighter jets to take to the air over Manila with orders to shoot down rebel planes. The U.S. military intervention was a reminder that U.S. troops are stationed throughout the world ready to intervene in the affairs of other countries and defend the interests of the U.S. ruling families. In this case they drew the rightist rebels in the Philippine military up short, and showed who the paymaster is.

Central America and the Caribbean have been a special target of U.S. imperialist provocations and threats.

- Panama's sovereignty continues to be challenged as the U.S. government openly gives the CIA funds with which to seek a way to topple that country's government. Washington wants to prevent Panama from exerting its rights over the Panama Canal.

- Despite a cease-fire declared by the Nicaraguan government, U.S.-backed contra mercenaries continue to wreak destruction and murder there. Up to November 1 (19 months and seven days after the cease-fire order) the number of Nicaraguan casualties came to 3,370. The contras destroyed 14 factories and 47 towns and kidnapped nearly 1,300 civilians.

Nicaragua's 1979 revolution, which overthrew the U.S.-backed dictator Anastasio Somoza, insists on its sovereignty, something Washington can't abide.

- The bloodbath occurring in El Salvador since the

By linking up with the growing resistance in the coalfields, and strengthening both fights as a result, the Eastern strikers have given the employers something else to consider — that those who begin to fight join together, become stronger, more united, and more determined.

This was demonstrated by the Communications Workers of America and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers union members in their recent 16-week strike against the NYNEX phone company. During their walkout, the telephone workers joined with the miners and Eastern strikers on picket lines and at rallies and demonstrations. They successfully pushed back NYNEX's attempt to make workers pay big health insurance premiums.

What the Eastern strikers deserve and need is reinforcement on the picket lines and in other actions. The December 8 "Stand up to Lorenzo" events in 12 cities are a good starting point for stepped-up, expanded, and frequent strike support actions, backed by the broadest possible forces the labor movement can mobilize.

In addition, the strike needs a massive war chest.

Workers at Boeing, who won pay increases and who will receive a hefty yearly bonus, could take the lead in initiating such a fund. They can set an example for others throughout the labor movement to emulate.

Boeing workers know that IAM strike benefits of \$100 a week don't go too far. That's what many Eastern strikers have been trying to get by on for months.

A union war chest for the Eastern strikers could be used to increase weekly strike benefits, expand food banks, beef up hardship funds, and fill the gap on other essential needs. Some of the pressure that has forced many strikers to get other jobs — which has weakened the fight — could be eased. Strikers would be able to devote more of their time to reaching out and explaining the issues in the fight, building strike actions, and extending a hand to other workers in struggle.

By pressing the fight against Eastern, workers everywhere will be in a stronger position to stand up to the employers. The Eastern strike has withstood blows throughout the year in part due to the reinforcement and solidarity it has received from other fights. Continued — and expanded — solidarity is needed to back up the strikers' pledge to stay out "one day longer" than Lorenzo.

beginning of November has "Made in the USA" markings all over it. Hundreds have been murdered, many more wounded, as the U.S.-backed Salvadoran military has carried out heinous crimes to break a decade-long rebellion led by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front. Since the beginning of this decade more than 70,000 have perished; 1 million have been driven into refugee camps or exile; and countless others have been maimed, tortured, "disappeared," or jailed.

The enormous arms flow to El Salvador comes from one source, the U.S. government, which finances and keeps afloat the government there to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars each year.

- Cuba is especially irksome to the U.S. rulers. For more than 30 years the island 90 miles off the coast of Florida has been the target of relentless U.S. aggression and hostility, including invasions, assassination plots against Cuban leaders, biological warfare, economic and trade embargoes, and hostile radio transmissions. Cuba's example of internationalism, most recently in helping defeat the apartheid army of South Africa in Angola, and its accomplishments in maintaining its socialist perspectives tick Washington off. Bush made a big point before and after the summit that Washington wants a "free Cuba," meaning a rollback of the revolution that has been a beacon for working people for more than 30 years.

War and the threat of war are inherent in the makeup of the imperialist system. In its unceasing drive for profits, exploitation, and plunder, imperialism inevitably meets resistance and rebellion.

This is not less true now. One only needs to consider the staggering impact of the foreign debt of colonial and semicolonial countries, as U.S. banks siphon billions of dollars from their economies. Some countries in Latin America, such as Argentina and Venezuela have already been racked by rebellions because the belt-tightening measures brought about due to the debt.

The brewing world capitalist crisis that opens the coming decade will trigger greater imperialist aggression and war and with it increased rebellion and revolutionary upheaval.

The challenge for working people everywhere is to step up actions demanding the United States halt its aggression against the people of El Salvador and Nicaragua; and to keep its hands off Cuba, Panama, and Angola, countries where working people are demanding Washington get off their back.

# Is Germany an imperialist country?

BY DOUG JENNESS

In our November 3 issue I noted that "Germany's ruling families are increasingly asserting their role" in Eastern Europe. I wrote that this is occurring at the same time that the U.S. capitalists' "political and economic weight relative to German imperialism in Europe is declining."

In a letter on the facing page, a reader questions whether "imperialist" accurately describes West Germany today. The main points raised are that Germany "has no colonies," "has not interfered in the affairs of other countries," and "its military forces are not overly large by Western standards."

In light of the role Germany's capitalist rulers have played in European and world politics in this century, this

## LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

challenge to the description of Germany as imperialist may seem puzzling to many readers.

But an important question is being posed here. The term "imperialism" is used today to describe many different phenomena and is often used simply as an epithet against particularly aggressive or hateful governmental policies. So some clarification would be useful.

The way Marxists have been using the term for the past 80 years is to describe a new stage in the evolution of capitalism.

One of the clearest descriptions of this process was presented by the Russian communist leader V. I. Lenin in 1916 in a pamphlet called *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Lenin noted that there were five characteristics marking this new stage in capitalist development.

They were the development of monopolies that play a decisive role in economic life; the merging of banking capital with industrial capital, that is the emergence of finance capital and a powerful financial oligarchy; the exceptional importance of the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities; the formation of international capitalist trusts and cartels that share the world among themselves; and the completion of the territorial division of the world among the biggest capitalist powers.

On the latter point Lenin noted that the capitalist rulers in the most economically advanced countries monopolize world markets and establish exploitative terms of trade in such a way that they oppress the economically weaker and less industrially developed countries — both colonies and semicolonies. The division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations, he wrote, "forms the essence of imperialism."

Lenin offered considerable statistical evidence from which he drew his conclusions about the basic features of imperialism. The capitalist countries that he treated most extensively were Britain, Germany, France, and the United States — all of which he showed had reached the monopoly stage of capitalism.

The intensified competition for raw materials, arenas for exporting capital, and spheres of influence between the imperialist ruling classes in these countries, in a world where most territory had already been divided up, led to a struggle to redivide the world through forcible annexations and conquest of territories. The result was the opening of the first world imperialist slaughter in 1914 — "a war," Lenin wrote, "to decide whether the British or German group of financial plunderers is to receive the most booty."

The German rulers were defeated in this conflict and lost some of their European territory and their few colonies.

Another, even more costly war was waged by the imperialist powers between 1939 and 1945. The German imperialists were again vanquished.

In the eastern part of Germany, under the occupation of Soviet troops, the capitalist exploiters were expropriated and state property established. In the western part, the imperialist victors, headed by the United States, invested substantial capital to rebuild the capitalist economy at the same time imposing policies to contain Germany's rise as a military power.

The capitalist ruling families were never removed and over time reasserted their economic weight in Europe. German capitalism today is marked by the same features that Lenin described — monopoly and domination by banking capital.

The big German banks like the Deutsche Bank transfer massive amounts of value out of oppressed Third World countries through collecting interest on loans. Germany remains an oppressor nation.

Holding colonies is not what makes an imperialist country. If the rulers in Britain and the United States gave all of theirs up, they would still be imperialist powers.

Germany, like Japan, has been prevented from becoming a strategic nuclear power. But then most of the imperialist countries, including Canada, Australia, and Italy, don't have this capacity. But the German rulers, with the largest armed forces of any capitalist country in Europe, is scarcely toothless. More significantly, however, the decreasing role of nuclear missiles in Europe has opened space for Germany to become politically more assertive.

# Running refinery during repairs caused disaster

BY WILLIE MAE REID

PASADENA, Texas — A massive explosion at Phillips Petroleum Co.'s plastics refinery here in late October resulted in at least two dozen workers killed or missing and more than 120 others injured. Memorial services were held in the Pasadena Convention Center October 30 for the victims.

The disaster is one of the worst industrial accidents to occur in the United States since World War II. Here, it is

## UNION TALK

being compared to the 1947 fire in Texas City, near Houston on the Gulf of Mexico, in which an explosion in the ship channel killed more than 500 people.

Reports placed tremors from the Phillips blast at 3.5 on the Richter scale.

"Entire buildings vanished," wrote the *Wall Street Journal* two weeks later. "Phone lines went dead. Metal debris rained down six miles away. The concussion was felt in downtown Houston, a dozen miles away, and despite the midday sun, the fireball was visible even farther."

Several weeks after the explosion, bulldozers and other heavy equipment were "still removing the tangles of steel that covered workers who had nowhere to run," the article said.

Initial reports traced the origin of the explosion to one of the reactor units in the polypropylene production plant. These units, set close together in rows, process a mixture

of hydrocarbons and catalysts to produce the feedstocks used in plastics.

These highly volatile gases escaped and ignited into a giant ball of flames that burned everything in its path. Separate explosions continued for an hour.

Fire fighters call the situation a "burn-out." It lasted until mid-morning the next day, releasing asbestos particles from devastated buildings, chlorine gas from ruptured containers, and "burned off" fumes from the substances being refined.

Company spokespeople and "experts" assured the surrounding community that "burning was better" than silent releases of fumes. Nothing was harmful, they said.

The Pasadena refinery, one of Phillips' largest, employs a work force of some 900. About 500 are organized by Local 4-227 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union (OCAW).

This facility had already been cited and fined for safety violations revealed in a fuel gas explosion last August. That fire killed one worker and critically injured three others. Phillips management is appealing the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's ruling.

After the October 23 explosion, OCAW members from the plant began gathering at their union hall. Some officials talked about the shock everyone felt — the disbelief, the pain of experiencing the senseless but certain deaths of missing coworkers.

In the crush of discussions, others expressed anger at the company's insistence on running the refinery with fewer workers and on taking added risks using less-skilled workers to perform maintenance while the units were running.

The plant destroyed at Phillips is typical of industry facilities.

Before the fire, it was a network of gigantic vessels, all connected by a series of pipes. The pipelines ran, spaghetti-like, carrying the substances being refined — called "process" — through successive phases.

Before the explosion, one part of the unit was down for repairs. It is believed to have provided the escape route for the gases released. But it was not physically separated or disconnected from the other vessels in the chain. They were still in service, continuing to make a high-temperature, high-pressure product.

After the explosion, OCAW International President Joseph Misbrener and Vice-president Robert Wages came here for meetings with Phillips and to talk to the media.

The union has been granted an injunction against Phillips forbidding the company from destroying evidence about the explosion. It also instructs Phillips to allow two union representatives on the investigating committee, including a photographer to take pictures of the debris and damaged equipment. A union representative must also be present during interviews with employees.

Phillips has announced that the work force will remain on the payroll until December 31. This follows a provision in the union contract for a 60-day notice of layoffs.

An OCAW Phillips Memorial Fund has been set up at the OCAW Federal Credit Union, 2306 Broadway, Houston, Texas 77012.

*Willie Mae Reid is a member of OCAW Local 43-67. She works at Shell's oil refinery in Deer Park, Texas.*

## LETTERS

### West Germany

Doug Jenness, in his "Learning About Socialism" column, recently referred to West Germany as an imperialist country. I question this usage.

West Germany has no colonies and has not interfered in the internal affairs of other countries. Its military forces are not overly large by Western standards and are confined entirely within its borders.

Merely being a powerful country economically does not automatically make it an imperialist one.

I look forward to Jenness' comments.

A reader  
Brooklyn, New York

### Double system of justice

The recent killing of a man in Louisville, Kentucky, by a trigger-happy cop brings into clarity the double system of justice we have in this country, covered up and justified by the big-business media.

This, as well as a Simpsonville murder by cops last summer, outside of Louisville, involved similar situations: the victims were fleeing from the cops and the cops were in no danger.

In both cases I'm sure loved ones grieved for the victims, but no coverage or consideration was given them by the media. Compare this with the gross, tear-jerking coverage given to cops when they meet the same fate.

I'm not trying to justify murder in either instance, only attempting to show that we — the general public — have rights too, whether we are "suspects" or "decent," law-abiding citizens. In the eyes of a paranoid, trigger-happy cop, there is little difference.

Murder is murder and it is time we erase the double standard and bring everyone, including cops, within the jurisdiction of the law.

Ed Meredith  
Caneyville, Kentucky

### 1989 brought relief

History will remember the year 1989 with relief as the year the Iron Curtain was raised in Europe and the Berlin Wall came down. The people in East Germany will be able to travel to other countries without having to go through checkpoints or to have permission of their government.

It would be a great day in history if armies of occupation stationed in countries other than their own could be sent home. It would be a great

day in history if embargo wars, blockade wars, economic wars, political wars, and religious wars could be stopped.

It would be the greatest year of all time if people could choose the economic, political, and religious form of government to live with and under.

Robert Berry  
Des Moines, Iowa

### What socialism isn't

If any explanation of what socialism is was forthcoming in your column "Socialism: what it is and where to read about it" (*Militant*, Nov. 24, 1989), this reader was hard pressed to find it. All one was able to cull was a brief, albeit distorted, explanation of what socialism is not.

Doug Jenness states, "The *Militant* gives a totally different perspective about socialism." But is that perspective consistent with the scientific socialism that Marx and Engels articulated? This reader believes it isn't.

Given the *Militant*'s vague generalities and abstractions when it comes to explaining socialism, it is hardly surprising that your column "Learning About Socialism" should contain so little learning.

To escape the responsibility and implied promise of a succinct explanation of what socialism must look like in real, concrete, and unambiguous terms by claiming that no one book contains an explanation is evidence to prove the claim made by some that the Socialist Workers Party and the *Militant* don't have a clue of what socialism really is.

Chris Camacho  
Miami, Florida

### Enjoys 'Militant'

I am a new reader of the *Militant*. I just want to say I enjoy "Learning About Socialism" by Doug Jenness and "Letters to the Editor," especially letters by prisoners.

Joe McBride  
Bridgeport, Connecticut

### Brigade to Cuba

*Militant* readers won't need to be told that the media in imperialist countries doesn't tell the truth about Cuba. One of the benefits of work-study brigades, like the Venceremos Brigade that goes from the United States, is that returning *brigadistas* can pass on their experience of the Cuban reality to others.

In 1988 I went to Cuba as part of the Southern Cross Brigade from

ART APPRECIATION,  
GREAT MOMENTS IN

Senator Helms  
visits the  
Sistine  
Chapel

NUDITY!  
LOOK AT THAT!  
DISGUSTING!



Australia and New Zealand. I recently showed slides from my trip to workmates at the Toyota assembly plant here in Christchurch. About 15 of them were interested in

finding out about the revolution's achievements in the fields of health care and education and in seeing how the Cubans are collectively tackling problems like the housing shortage through the minibrigade system of organizing voluntary work.

The program that French oceanographer Jacques Cousteau made about Cuba as part of a series on the Caribbean was shown earlier this year at prime time on New Zealand television. This film also gives a glimpse of the real Cuba.

Terry Lynch  
Christchurch, New Zealand

### Unexpected militancy

United Auto Workers Local 287 recently ended a 52-day strike against Borg-Warner. The company, after borrowing billions to prevent a hostile takeover, had demanded concessions. The most ruthless demand was the gutting of health insurance for retired workers.

But when management tested the fiber of the union, they discovered a militancy they had not expected.

Local 287 was backed up by the solidarity of organized labor throughout the region — some 3,000 unionists marched in downtown Muncie in support of the strik-

ers. In addition, the local itself extended solidarity to other workers, participating in a rally to support the Pittston Coal strikers in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Because Local 287 held its ground, the entire labor movement is in a stronger position to defend against future employer attacks on our living standards. We now have a deeper understanding of the self-evident truth that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Jerry Ulman  
Muncie, Indiana

### Pittston strike support

More than 50 people stopped by between classes at the University of Louisville on November 21 to hear a United Mine Workers of America representative, Morgan Bayless, speak on the Pittston Coal strike.

Bayless explained the strike wasn't over money, but over Pittston's refusal to pay into the coal operators' pension fund and an attempt to destroy the UMWA. "They're flat out trying to bust the union. They and the Frank Lorenzos think they can bust the unions — but they're wrong. We are going to win," he said to applause. "The UMWA is going to win!"

Bayless was in Louisville at the invitation of the Campus Coalition for Labor Justice at the university and Jefferson Community College, and the U of L Progressive Students League. The outdoor meeting re-

ceived broad support from labor and community groups. Among those giving greetings were Steve Stoll, chairperson of the Fairness for Eastern Employees Committee; Will Burden, president of Auto Workers Local 862 at Ford; and Jim Sidell, who is part of an effort to organize health-care workers at Humana hospitals.

Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and striking Eastern pilot Joe Buonadonna were present. The meeting was supported by the state Rainbow Coalition, the National Lawyers Guild, and supporters of the *Militant*.

Bayless also met students at Jefferson Community College and leafleted the campus about the Pittston fight. He stopped by the Eastern picket line and later met with the Greater Louisville Central Labor Council to express thanks for the support striking mine workers have received.

Bronson Rozier  
Louisville, Kentucky

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

# British miners visit strike camp

BY BERNIE SENTER

CARTERTON, W. Va. — Three union members from Britain — two coal miners and one rail worker — were warmly welcomed by striking Pittston miners when they visited Camp Solidarity here November 27-29.

Paul Galloway from Nottinghamshire, with 13 years in the mines, and Jim Spaul from South Yorkshire, with some 20 years mining, are members of the National Union of Mineworkers. They joined rail worker Ruth Haswell, a member of Women Against Pit Closures from Cardiff, Wales, to extend their support for the eight-month strike by the United Mine Workers of America against Pittston Coal Group. They arrived with solidarity messages from five NUM locals, the NUM National Executive Board, and Women Against Pit Closures.

UMWA Local 1259 President James Hicks, director of the miners' camp, organ-

**British unionists to Pittston miners:  
"Your struggle is our struggle."**

ized a two-day tour for the British unionists to picket lines, community centers, and strike support meetings.

Hicks explained the importance of Camp Solidarity, which was set up two months into the strike during the June sympathy walkouts by 44,000 UMWA members. The strike against Pittston involves some 1,900 miners in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

"We've had close to 50,000 people come through the camp," he said. "They get an education here. We sit and talk with them and take them out on the picket line. After a day you can see it in their eyes. They're changed. It gets their blood boiling and they get back on track if they had any union blood in them," said Hicks.

#### Visit to jailed striker

The first stop for the British workers was the Russell County jail where Pittston striker Frank Cantrell is serving three months on contempt of court charges. Cantrell appreciated the visit. Galloway told him of the campaign waged in Britain on behalf of victimized unionists during the 1984-85 miners' strike.

Next was a chat with strikers on picket duty at Pittston's Moss No. 3 coal processing plant. Pickets told them about the September takeover of the plant by miners. Picket activity has slowed down a bit, they said, since negotiations between the UMWA and Pittston began mid-November with federal mediator William Usery.

Many miners told the British unionists their lives had been changed by the strike. "Used to be I'd go to work, collect my pay, pay my dues, and stay home. My father did the fighting to build the UMWA," said Mike Bolling. Now he counts himself among the fighters.

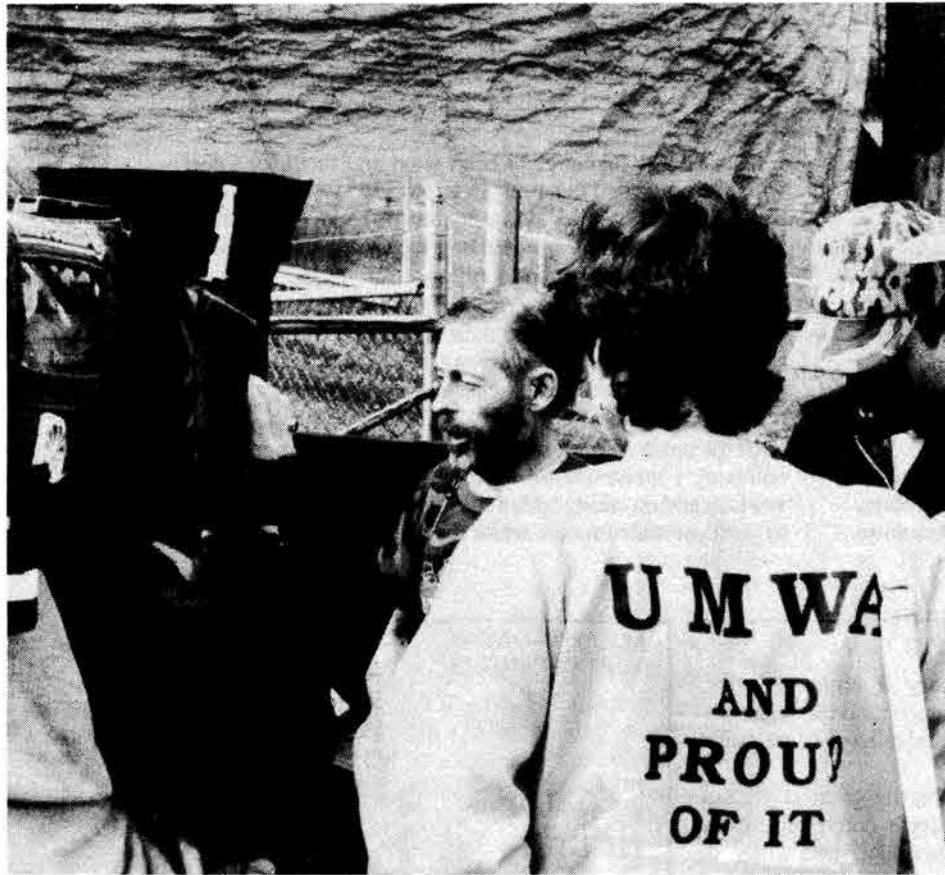
#### Staying in the fight

Referring to the strike fund and donations from unions across the country, Bolling said, "Everyone gets \$200 a week which allows you to devote yourself full-time to the strike rather than looking for work. If I couldn't draw that, I'd be in North Carolina working and if I'm not here — I'm not in the fight."

Striker Jim Counts said, "When times were good we didn't look around to see what was going on. What happened to us happened to people all over the world. Now we're being united in solidarity."

The British unionists joined the picket lines in front of Pittston's offices. The pickets there are UMWA retirees.

Later they traveled to nearby St. Paul where members of the Daughters of Mother Jones and UMWA Women's Auxiliary were



British miner Jim Spaul (center) is interviewed with fellow unionists by local NBC-TV affiliate Channel 5 while visiting Moss No. 3 picket line in Virginia to support striking Pittston coal miners.

staffing a clothing outlet center for strikers.

Over the campfire that evening the British miners exchanged experiences with three Illinois miners. Galloway informed them that only 250 miners out of 1,200 where he works

are in the NUM, the rest belong to a company "union." One miner asked how they could work in the same mine with them and Galloway described the efforts to patiently rebuild the NUM there.

# UN food agency to aid Palestinians

BY HARRY RING

Despite a U.S. threat of financial blackmail, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) voted overwhelmingly to work closely with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to help develop the stunted agricultural resources of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Only the U.S. and Israeli representatives voted against the resolution at a November 29 session of the FAO in Rome. Ninety-six countries voted in favor.

Washington warned of "grave consequences" for the FAO and threatened to cut off U.S. financial contributions.

The U.S. government already owes the agricultural development agency \$82 million, plus a 1989 obligation of \$61 million.

# New Jersey to coalfields caravan

BY DAVE HURST

CARTERTON, Va. — Among the hundreds of visitors here at striking Pittston coal miners' Camp Solidarity the weekend of November 18-19 was a contingent from New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The majority were students from Rutgers University. The group of 30 also included members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). The six-car caravan drove through the night to arrive in time for a Saturday rally.

Some 500 striking miners and their supporters packed the Russell County Fairgrounds exhibit hall for a solidarity rally. While unionists sang "We Shall Not Be Moved," 150 members of the United Auto Workers from eight states paraded into the hall carrying picket signs with slogans such as "United we stand: UAW-UMWA."

Also participating were miners and teachers from Illinois, ILGWU members from Pennsylvania and New York, and members

The resolution approved by the FAO condemned Israeli policies and practices that "impede the basic requirements for the development of the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory."

It opposed "Israeli confiscation of Palestinian land and expropriation of Palestinian water resources."

Since Israel seized the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, it has systematically thwarted the development of Palestinian agriculture.

To create a big pool of low-paid labor for capitalist industry and agriculture in Israel, the military authorities in the West Bank and Gaza have driven thousands of Palestinians off their land and made life as difficult as possible for those who have managed to hold

onto a plot.

In the name of "security," countless pieces of choice land have been taken over.

The Israelis have also choked off Palestinian water supplies. Palestinian farmers are forbidden by the military rulers to develop any water reserves that were not already being used in 1967. Meanwhile, water in bountiful supply has been made available to the Israeli settlers.

The decision of the FAO to cooperate with the PLO stems from the recognition that the PLO is the only organized force in the West Bank and Gaza that is able and willing to work on developing Palestinian agriculture. By voting no on the resolution, Washington and the Israeli regime demonstrated their determination to keep the Palestinian people impoverished.

Meanwhile, U.S. and Israeli delegates and others are attempting to scotch a resolution calling on the UN General Assembly to recognize the PLO as the representative of a Palestinian state.

A year ago, the PLO proclaimed an independent Palestinian state. More than 100 governments have extended it some form of recognition.

According to the November 30 *New York Times*, there was an unsuccessful attempt to block introduction of the UN resolution. The paper said the U.S. and many Western European governments, as well as Moscow, had joined in this try.

Last October, the Soviet delegation had abstained on a vote to expel Israel from the United Nations. Previously, the Soviet Union had voted for expelling Israel. An expulsion motion has been made yearly on the basis that Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank violates the UN charter.

Bitterly opposing the current UN resolution to recognize the PLO as representing an observer state at the United Nations, Washington threatened to cancel all its financial obligations to the body.